

THE YEAR IN MUSIC

# SPIN

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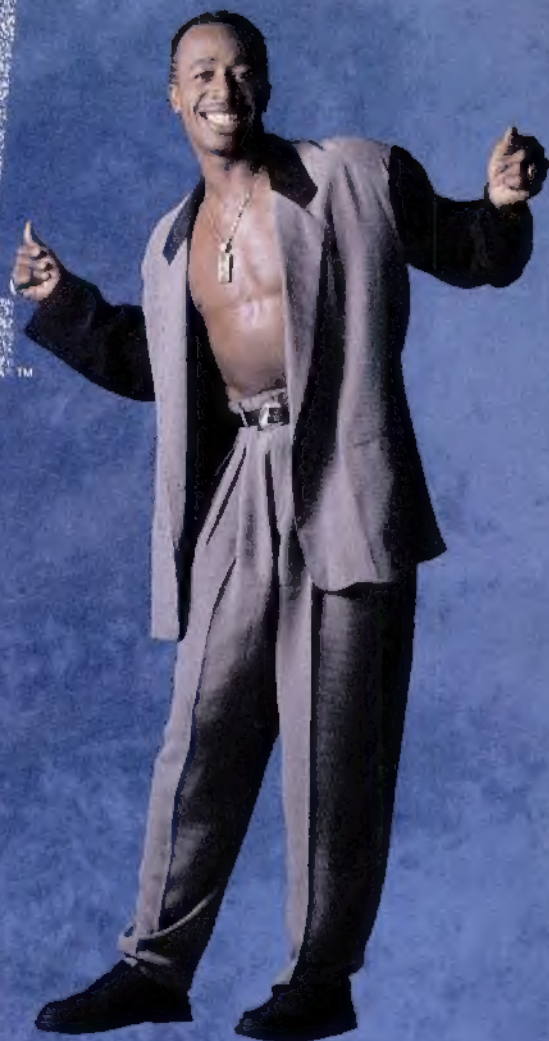


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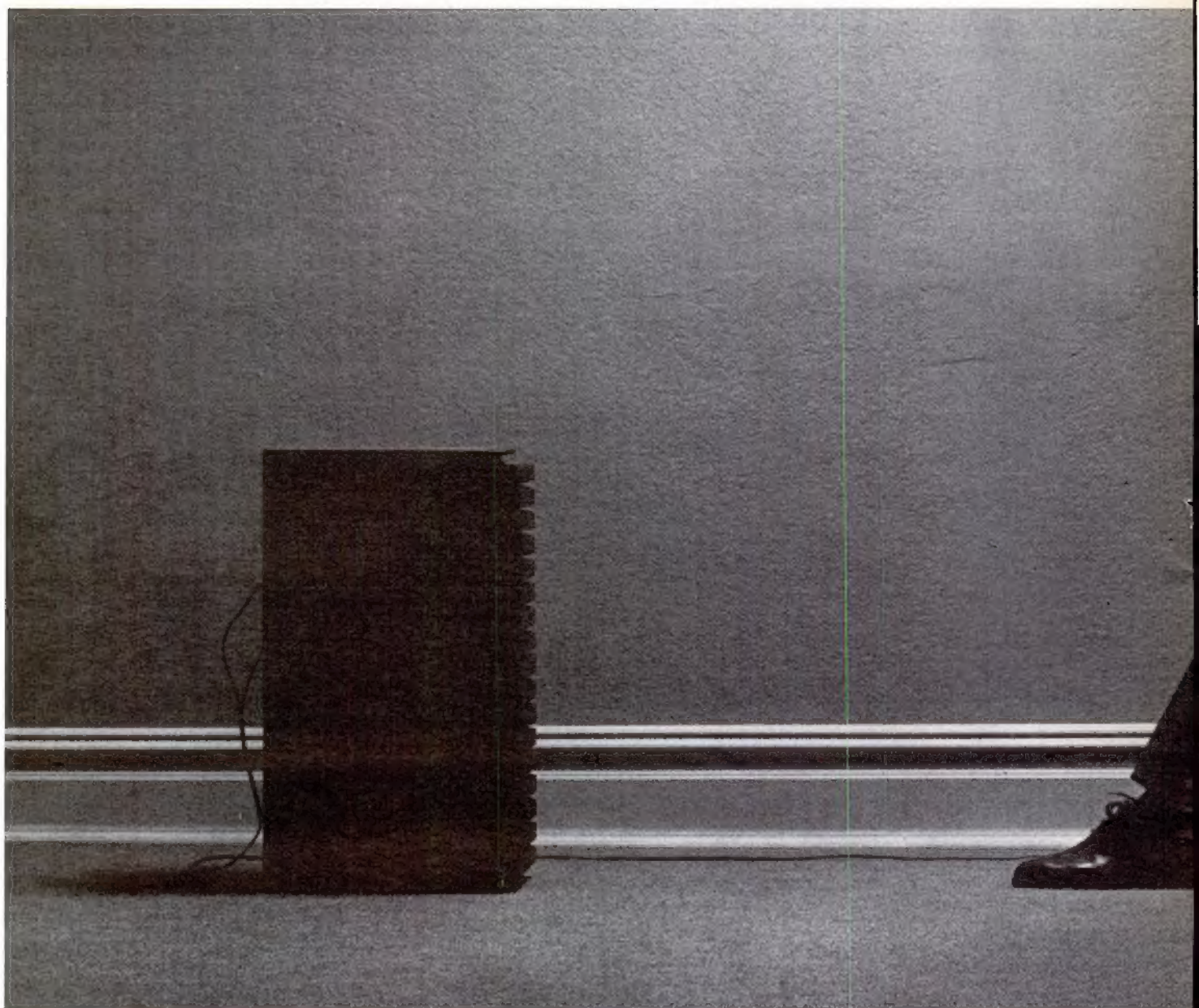
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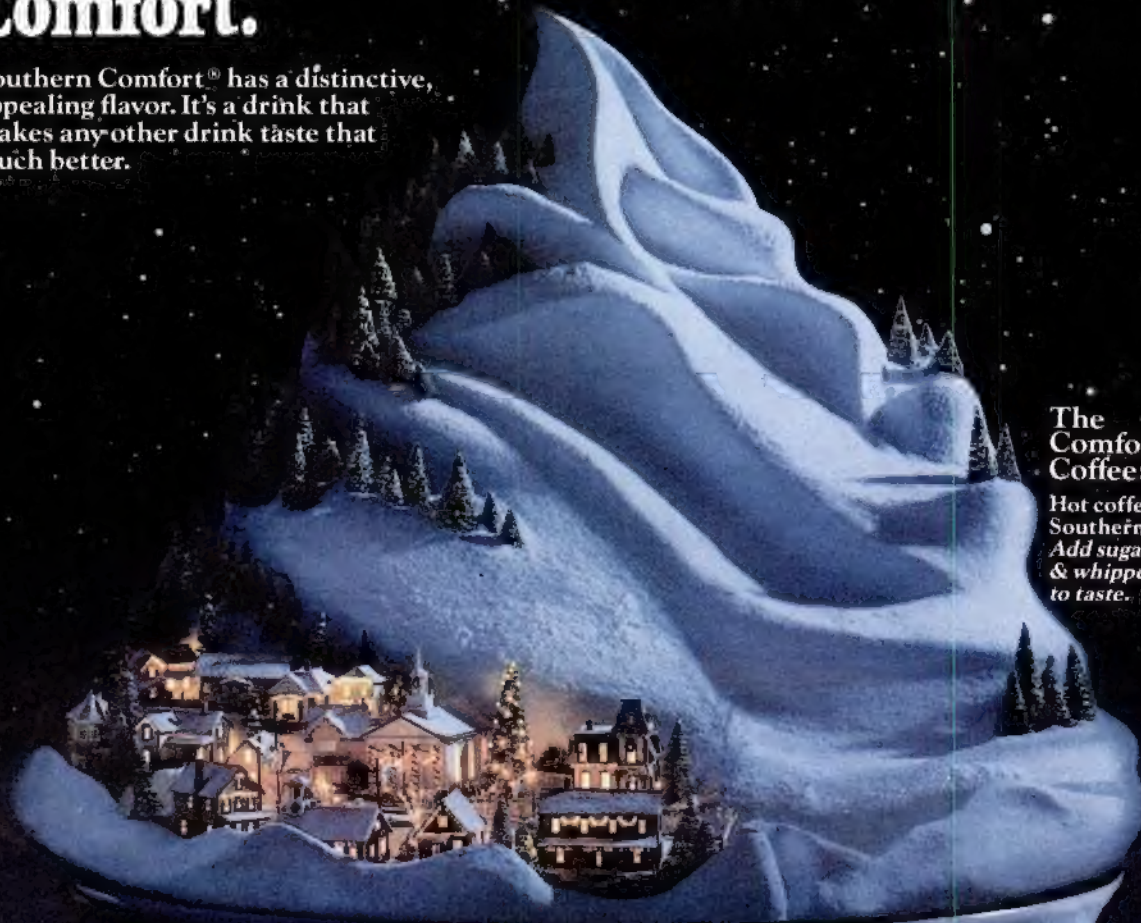


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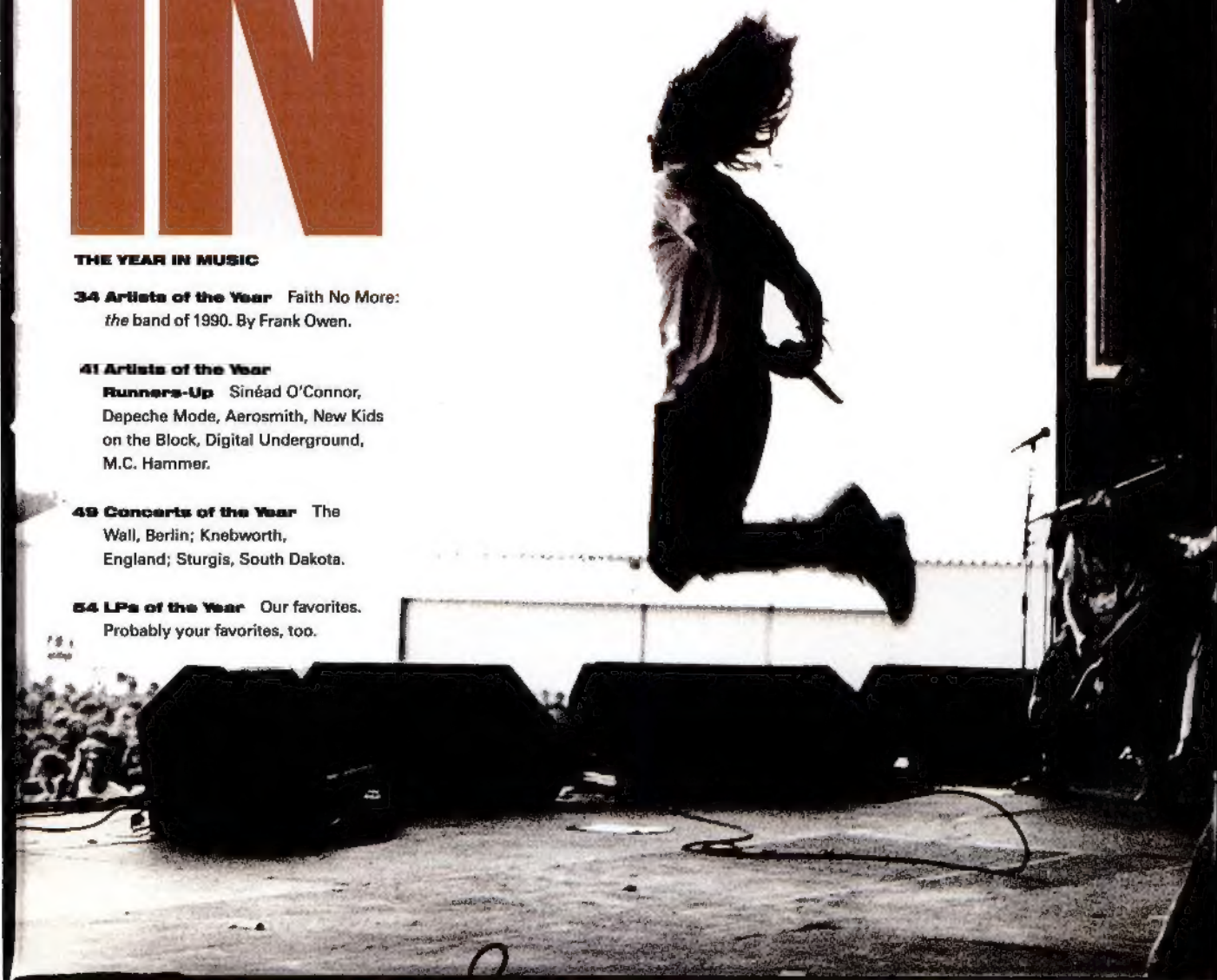
## THE YEAR IN MUSIC

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# TOP SPIN

**W**HEN I FIRST MET SPIKE LEE I didn't like him. He seemed not to notice I was there. I had come to his office on Broadway to pick him up for lunch to discuss his being the guest editor for our October issue. On the street he walked a couple of feet in front of me. He turned corners sharply to stay ahead of me, I thought; a rude and annoying thing to do. When we got to the restaurant I was surprised he didn't stop and wait for me to open the door.

Inside, over lunch, I warmed up to him, although I can't say I saw any evidence that he warmed up to me. There was just something about him I liked. I instinctively felt there was a good person in Spike Lee. And I realized the shell, the cold exterior that most observers have concluded is a racist attitude, was really just a uniform, like a priest's, that he was going to always wear to keep the situation formal, to keep his distance.

That first meeting was all business. Very focused and clear cut. Every subsequent meeting was all business too, for that matter, except once over dinner, when we were going over specific story assignments. I finally said let's just put everything down for a while and talk about something else. He was giving me indigestion. So, for about 30 minutes, we discussed nothing related to the issue. Then, as abruptly as I'd stopped our working, he restarted it. At 10:20—what I would have considered mid-evening with anyone else—he said he had to go or he wouldn't be able to get a cab back to Brooklyn. Cabs went to Brooklyn at any time I told him. "Not for a black man they don't," he said.

I walked with him to the end of the street and we hailed a cab. Spike checked that the driver, who was black, would take him to Brooklyn, and he said he would, so Spike said good night to me and got in.

I grew to really like Spike, although, tangibly, he never really gave me anything of himself to like. My affection grew out of that initial

instinct and an accumulated, albeit slight, understanding of him. He was always friendly; at times he seemed to be about to be really relaxed with me and then caught himself. I don't think he disliked me, or what I represent—I think the opposite is true, but that some internal, rigidly adhered to discipline precludes him from demonstrating it. Not, I think, because I'm white, but because I'm not black. And in the tiny margin of that difference, I believe, lies the key to understanding Spike's complex, intelligent, and flawed personality.

What makes Spike appealing is that he's driven. The same thing makes him unappealing, too, depending on your sensibility. There's nothing tentative about him. He's mistaken as a racist when in fact he's not calling for any particular social agenda, but rather articulating existing social malaises better than just about anyone else, which is what disturbs people. Spike has the ability to nail black angst on the head. Hear about it from him and you get it. He makes white America wince the way vinegar on a cut makes you wince.

I don't agree with everything he says, nor am I a Spike Lee, or black, apologist (nor does Spike or the black culture need one). I think Spike is on a hair trigger with the accusation that everyone who criticizes or disagrees with him is a racist, but he's often right about that too. I think he was right during the controversy over black teenagers killing one another for Air Jordans when he said he and Michael Jordan weren't the reason these kids were dying. But Jordan handled himself and the issue better by admitting that he and Lee had to think about what was happening, and that he was disturbed by it. The difference between Jordan and Lee is that Jordan is not a warrior in the undeclared black war, and Spike is. Wrongly, Spike, like Chuck D, denies black culpability, because in his war against white submersion of black



Spike has the ability to nail black angst on the head. Hear about it from him and you get it.

culture, he can't allow himself to admit any exists. Spike sees Marion Barry, for instance, not as someone who has committed human fallibility, but treason.

Spike likes being Spike, I sense, in that he—or "it"—has become more than the sum of the man as filmmaker, and from that has come an apparent arrogance that is easy to attack. I never found him arrogant, just defensive, but I can plainly see where he comes off as such. And I can see where all the attention he has gotten has created a self-fulfilling prophecy: angry young black man who sees himself as a beleaguered leader and the center of a self-righteous universe, has become just that.

When I told someone the story about Spike being worried about getting a cab, that person said he thought it strange Spike didn't have a limousine, which he could presumably afford. It was almost as if

this person, without intending to, was saying that Spike's being a victim of prejudice was his own fault. If a black cabdriver wouldn't take a rich white person to Brooklyn late at night the reaction would be widespread outrage.

It's easy to dismiss Spike Lee as a racist and anti-Semitic, whether he is one or not, and I believe he's neither, just as it is easy to taint Martin Luther King, Jr., by suggesting he was a womanizer. What's harder, and takes more courage from us, is to be open to what people like Spike Lee have to say about prevailing racist attitudes in this country, even when they slip into some of the same inflexible thinking themselves. Because even though we can easily drown out their voices, no amount of indignation or denial will drown out or resolve the problems the voices were raised against in the first place.

—Bob Guccione, Jr.



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## POINT LETTERS BLANK

EDITED BY  
NATHANIEL  
WICE

### I Like Spike

Interesting issue with Spike in charge. I'm writing Bush (and McCain and DeConcini) that I don't want my tax dollars spent bugging Eddie ["Eddie!" October '90]. And if the FBI/CIA aren't to blame, then our "public servants" should be able to identify who is.

I was disappointed the Marlboro Man is still white

M. Marty  
Phoenix, Arizona

The Spike Lee issue solidified a conviction most of us have had for a long time—that SPIN is the only mainstream periodical of popular culture worth reading. Never mind that I generally read the whole thing while standing in line at 7 Eleven. I'm a grad student, for chrissakes, which means I read fast and have no money. But the October issue I bought. I read it from cover to cover and disagreed with a lot (especially and including Al Sharpton). I plan to hold on to it because I think it will stand as a challenging touchstone to what looks to be an enormously troubling decade.

Marshall Boswell  
Miami, Florida

### Fear of a Black Issue

Thank you for giving Spike Lee the opportunity to publicly interview for a job with Eddie Murphy ["Eddie!" October '90]

Look out, Eddie! Like everyone else, that butt-kisser just wants you for your money.

Kevin Filer  
Compton, California

Thanks for making Spike Lee your first guest editor. It made me realize that Lee is a brilliant, talented, charismatic, entrepreneurial, sensitive, artistic racist.

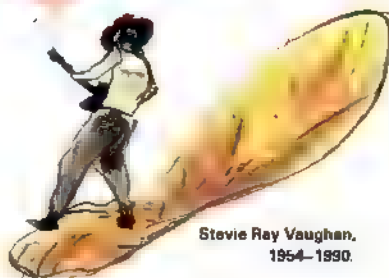
K. Robert Gordon  
Crystal Lake, Illinois

Shame on you, Spike! You want the "black community" to be respected, and you take a perfect opportunity to display some positive black movement and you waste it on a bunch of bitching lunatics who not only hate whites, but hate blacks who like whites. After reading "Black II Black" [Antihero, October '90], in which it was implied that white people who think they like blacks are confused, I just wanted to puke all over the vicious article. This edition and hateful attitudes like yours perpetuate discrimination. Why didn't you title the edition "Black Power"? You blew it, buddy! I hope the "black community" thanks you for it.

Traci Von Luhrte  
Placentia, California

I'm a white male college student who happens to be married to an African-American female Mr Lee, I think it's time to stop saying "black" and "white" and say "brothers and sisters for humanity."

Robert M Wilson  
Clearwater, Florida



Stevie Ray Vaughan,  
1954-1990

### Idol Smashing

Billy Idol [September '90]? Why not just run cover stories on record company executives if you're that excited about phony alternatives to formula rock? Billy is to punk what Huey Lewis is to rock: a shamelessly boring sellout, or about as rebellious as a Pepsi video. Even his sneer gimmick must be a scar from some fishing accident.

With all the radical music bursting under this troubled land, you could at least feature a Billy Bragg before a Billy Idol. And if Legs's stiff writing gets any more wooden, you'll have to spray for termites.

Bill Blank  
Detroit, Michigan

Sonic Youth deserved the cover more than Billy Idol (who sucks) did.

Emily Jones  
Arcata, California





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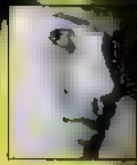
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## You Better Not Pout, You Better Not Shout—She's Making a List

1. Thank you for the piece on vegetarianism [Antihero, September '90]. There is no good reason to eat meat; there are several good reasons *not* to.

2. Thank you for sending Amy Linden out to interview me. You should be commended for hiring women journalists in a competitive, male-dominated field. It is a pleasure to work with a female human over the age of 25 who is old enough to have seen a few trends come and go; fully aware that spiked heels are impractical for work or running from rapists, purse-snatchers, people on drugs who talk at mailboxes, and other big-city predators

3. I keep hearing that vinyl is dead, and I keep running into people who don't have CD players (including me). I fought with my record company, I.R.S., to release "Bloodletting" as a 12-inch. I hope enough people will buy it to prove the record company wrong. I'd really like to see some investigative reporting on who's making the killing on those inflated CD prices. I know I'm not.

4. Perry Farrell looks like an insect. Perry Farrell sings like an insect. Is Perry Farrell an insect? Just wondering

5. Roseanne Barr is God.

6. Can I be in the Breeders next time?

*Johnette Napolitano*  
Concrete Blonds  
Van Nuys, California

## May the (Police) Force Be With You

I can only come to the conclusion that Mr. Jack Thompson ("Fear of a Black Penis," September '90) is a pathetic, lying moron. Why else would he be interested in Luther Campbell's soul? He just wants brownie points with the parents organizations and his name in the headlines. George Lucas is a greedy son of a bitch. Anyone with any common sense can figure out the difference between a 2 Live Crew album and a *Star Wars* soundtrack.

*Adam Lehecky*  
Mesa, Arizona

## Antiheroes

I have to question the motives of the world-conscious Archie Bunkers

who preach to the converted and alienate the rest of us—the earth or their egos? So I am truly grateful for Harvey Diamond [Antihero, September '90].

Presenting solutions versus bludgeoning with guilt? Wow. What an ideal

*Lulu Smith*  
Tucson, Arizona

Martin Lee and Norman Solomon are heroes for saying what needs to be said about General Electric's ownership of NBC [Antihero, July '90] and how that shapes the news. I feel at once empowered by this knowledge and helpless because of the enormity of the problem.

I will do what I can. I will definitely not buy G.E.'s products or vote for anyone who receives election contributions from that corporation.

*Ronald Groth*  
Citizen, Planet Earth  
San Diego, California

## The General in His Labyrinth

Having just lived through a Florida election where one candidate made an issue of his opponent's use of an antidepressant drug, and watching a President who addresses the coming of World War III from press conferences at his golf course, Gabriel García Márquez's tale of a leader who speaks his mind and challenges issues is refreshing [September '90]. I'm not that knowledgeable about Fidel or Cuban history, but change comes so fast now that nothing should be ruled out. I hope that relations between my country and Cuba improve so that I may begin to understand a country so close to my own.

*Glen T. Harrison*  
Orlando, Florida

Mr. Márquez is a Nobel Prize-winning ass-kisser.

*Edward Vega*  
Bronx, New York

## Corrections

Spike Lee's comments on Michael Jackson were erroneously attributed to Eddie Murphy [p. 98, October '90], who said only, "I talked to Michael two months ago, three months ago."

Axl Rose's quotes on his home life ["Bad to the Bone," November '90] should have been attributed to *People* magazine.

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# FLASH

EDITED BY FRANK OWEN

## SHOPPING

### The Pet Shop Boys and the new positivity

"Shopping is more American than thinking."

—Andy Warhol

The case *against* the Pet Shop Boys is deep, stiff and boring, dead white fish, effete and self-adoring life-style gourmets. But the case *for* the Pet Shop Boys is deeper: stylish commentators on everyday life who consistently debunk the alibi of the deep—which lies at the heart of rock'n'roll ideology.

Americans have never understood or appreciated the way the Pet Shop Boys ironically invert the terms *rock* and *disco*, attacking the hegemony

of the former while valorizing the latter. This is a band who once released an album called simply *Disco* and wrote songs with titles such as "Shopping" and "Suburbia."

Sure it's camp, but not in the debased sense of that overused word. The Pet Shop Boys' version of camp is closer to Susan Sontag's definition: "Camp is the answer to the problem: how to be a dandy in an age of mass culture."

SPIN: Some Americans have pegged you as this boring band who write songs about such mundane matters as shopping. Do you shop as much

these days? There doesn't seem anything worth buying anymore.

NEIL TENNANT: No, I don't shop as much these days. Last year we decided that the Pet Shop Boys were post-shopping. But, actually, let's face it, it's quite a relief, isn't it?

SPIN: I know you don't believe in packaging a story into neat decades, but does that sense of relief have anything to do with the death of the '80s style culture and the onset of the new age '90s? It feels good not to have to worry about whether you're wearing the right suit.

TENNANT: I agree. But what worries me is that it's



# IN AMERICA



Neil Tennant, left, and Chris Lowe:  
Two versions of camp.

for a return to camp songwriting basics.

getting a little too hippie-ish. When I was at school in the late '60s when progressive rock was happening, I wasn't a happy boy. I didn't like it when John Lennon grew a beard. I like it when music is glamorous, when it's got a hardness and a sharpness about it. I really have a problem when things get too groovy and laid-back.

SPIN: There's a lot of talk at the moment about the new positivity in popular music.  
TENNANT: Well, the Pet Shop Boys have always had a lot of negative energy, you know. I understand what people are talking about, but it seems a little banal to me, like reading a Scientology

manual. "Ooh, it's the '90s, so we're all positive." What does that mean? It's reducing everything to a sort of trend.

SPIN: Tell me about the new album, *Behavior*. How does it differ from the last album, *Actually*?  
TENNANT: The last album was like the *Sgt. Pepper* record. I was meant as a statement about how far you could push dance music. Contrary to what you think, in America, dance music isn't a limiting form. You can do anything with dance music. With the latest record we're a lot less overblown. We've taken the pomp out of our music. *Mellow* is a horrifying word, but that's kind of the

way it is. We also wanted to get a more electro sound, programming original sounds rather than relying on sampling. There was a great quote on the cover of *Smash Hits* in Britain from the Manchester group Candy Flip, who said, "Perfect pop is dead." Well, I think perfect pop is making a big comeback. People are bored with everything being sampled.

SPIN: Pop music being reduced to a series of special effects, you mean?

TENNANT: That's right. People want to hear songs and we've always written songs. The Pet Shop Boys still advocate that perfect pop sound.

Frank Owen

Illustration by Graham Turner



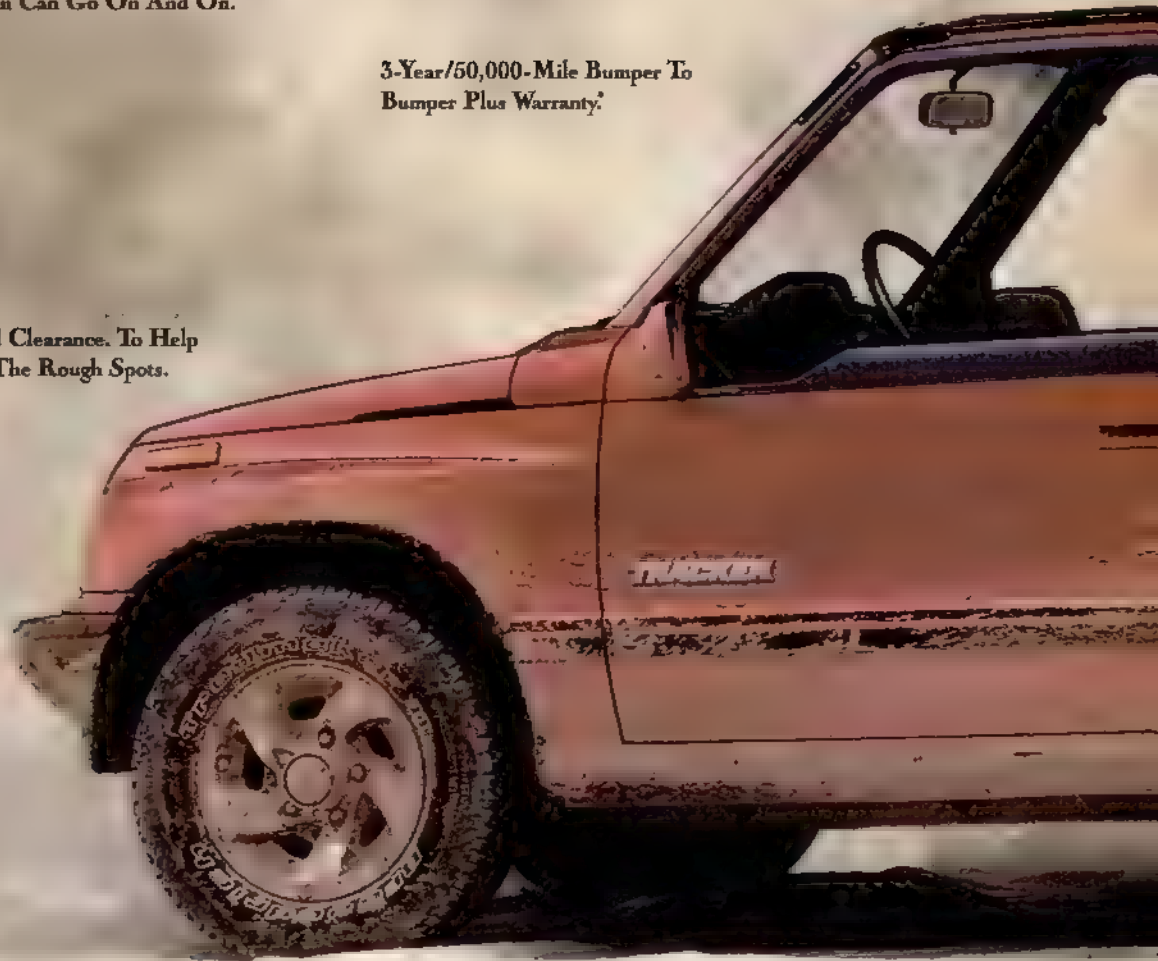
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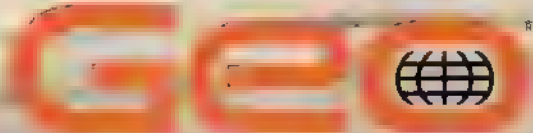
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GET TO KNOW



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**George Michael**, *Listen Without Prejudice, Vol. 1* (Columbia) He might have stolen every melody on this record, but his pastiches flow so seamlessly you can never catch him at his game, which has always been the hallmark of a great songwriter (or sampler). *Prejudice* could do with fewer ballads, but George has as much a right to be downbeat as, um, Phil Collins. Or Morrissey. (Greer)

**Velvet Monkeys**, *"Rake"* (Rough Trade) Don Fleming, late of B.A.L.L., leads an all-star cast, including Thurston Moore (Sonic Youth) and J. Mascis (Dinosaur, Jr.), through ten good-natured, raucous workouts. Velvet Monkeys began many years ago in Washington, D.C., but their present incarnation sounds more like Fleming's later work both with B.A.L.L. and Dinosaur. (Greer)

**Jonathan Richman**, *Jonathan Goes Country* (Rounder) The former Modern Lover is back, singing not about ice cream men, Martians, and innocence, but about cowgirls, horses, and sorrow. Despite their pedal steel/Nashville tinge, these originals and covers (Marty Robbins, Porter Wagoner, Skeeter Davis) are performed with classic Richman humor and sensibility. (Blackwell)

## HEAVY ROTATION



### Staff Selections

**AC/DC**, *The Razor's Edge* (Atco) Their first album in three years is a foot-stomping good time with no bad ads at all. "Got You by the Balls" and "Rock Your Heart Out" pretty much say it all. Vocalist Brian Johnson sounds like he's on helium, while Angus shreds his six-string in fine form. Bang your head 'til your nose bleeds. (Spencer)

**Primal Scream**, *Come Together* (Jive). A slap in the face for rock'n'roll orthodoxy or a flagrant case of a band jumping on the UK indie-dance bandwagon? Who cares? This EP is a fine record that restates the case for the argument that a popular music is potentially danceable. (Owen)

**The It**, *On Top of the World* (Black Market/Big Life import) Never mind that the It's debut album is only available as a U.K. import—its roots are pure Chicago house (and jazz and funk and soul and rap), brought from here to there to here by writer/producer/performer Larry Heard (a.k.a. Mr. Fingers) and lyricist/vocalist Harn Dennis. A seductive, slow-danceable LP that quietly synthesizes an entire generation or two of black American music. (Woodruff)

## DISCOURSE FEVER

**Brian Eno**, pop's most

uncompromising egghead, is back

with two new albums. And he's

still talking all that jazz.

I didn't expect Brian Eno to surprise me. But he did. I knew he'd be courtly and thoughtful; I knew he looked unremarkable now, Martian no longer (as pop caught up with his ideas, his age caught up with his appearance); I knew that his new LP releases (*Wrong Way Up*, a collaboration with John Cale featuring Eno's first songs in thirteen years, and *The Shutov Assembly*, his soon-to-come solo instrumental collection) don't break ground the way his albums once did, it seemed, almost daily.

But as I enter the interview room, he sprints to put on some Siberian multiphonic singing (*translation*: an Asiatic folkie's voice split into two quite distinct notes, high whistle and low drone). Then he comes and stands behind me, and does a passable imitation of the same, singing two notes at once into my ear.

Before the original alien egghead rode in on Roxy Music's novelty glam-wave, pop was still simple. It was innocently '60s, an unreflective force of nature. Its potential was entirely latent. Eno talked about it in a new, baffling language, threaded with words like *cybernetics*, *behaviorism*, *process*, and *systems*. And he insisted that he did what he did because he was a nonmusician, after which pop has never stopped being flooded with his ideas.

"I'm unreasonably pro pop," he says. "I'm trying to redress a balance, in terms of public respect for things. I think high-art music gets a huge amount of respect, in pop's disfavor. It's respected by making pop lower, by creating a hierarchy which it can sit on top of. The whole picture is that the great innovations are made in high-art music and they sort of trickle down and come out in some pathetic weak form in pop. This is not a picture I can tolerate. It drives me crazy!"

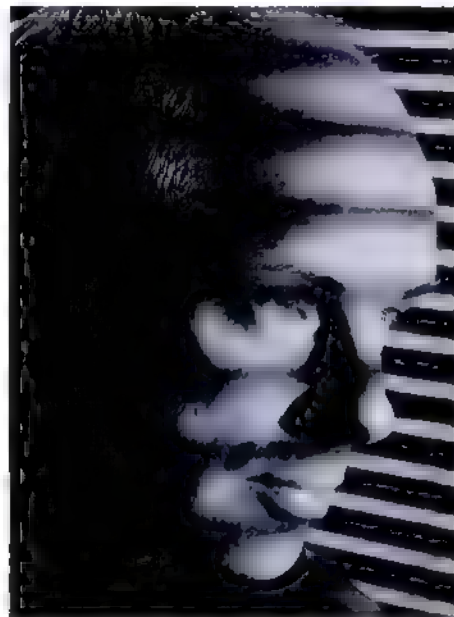
On any morning after the mid-'70s you could wake up and find Eno brandishing some new project, and even if you really didn't like it that much, a series of unexpected conceptual shifts

were likely to chase down even the most reluctant listener.

He released work that neatly framed the idea of *ambience* and its inverse (*Music for Airports* versus *No New York*). Sound-as-pleasured-complicity and sound-as-violent-refusal became the poles of the universe he birthed, the universe that all of us live in, from Bono victims to world-beat converts—Eno invented U2 and Africa, of course.

Eno sets it up differently. He makes a distinction between "sounding" music (in which deep truth is purely sound—the fact of all pop, kind of) and "conceptual" music (which always has other agendas).

To remind us why he can get away with such talk when others flounder, he uses Judas Priest, no less, to prove his point; and goes on to map heavy metal onto new age—conceptually despised genres which exhibit hitherto unheard-of sounding qualities. "You don't go to listen to



melody or rhythm," he says. "The thrill is being immersed in detailed sound, loud or ambient."

What we're getting to, though I didn't think of it till later, is Virtual Reality, and the fact that it's actually been available, on Walkmans, for ten years now. As all culture turns into pop and/or democratically accessible/manipulable simulation of same, Eno becomes the nearly unacknowledged legislator of everything.

"It feels good to know one's finger was on at least one pulse, now and again," he says. "The negative side is that it creates a kind of expectation among other people and you end up being frightened of yourself. Like, you start to find yourself thinking, God, is this important enough for me to do?"

Mark Sinker



# Smart.



It's a great party. Everybody's dancing. But does everything stop when the CD ends? Not if you have the Magnavox Carousel CD Changer.

This innovative CD player plays up to 5 different compact discs. You can even pre-program up to 50 songs in any order you want. Plus, you can change up to 4 discs while the fifth one is playing.

So, the music goes on and on. And this machine gets the best out of your CDs, thanks to a 4x oversampling digital filter and dual 16-bit digital-to-analog converters. But that's not surprising. After all, it's from the inventors of CD technology.

Magnavox was always a smart player in the CD world. But making it non-stop is even smarter.

## MAGNAVOX



# FLASH

**A television special to benefit AIDS research, *Red Hot and Blue* features the songs of Cole Porter as interpreted by some of today's finest musicians and filmmakers.**

"Making videos is awful," admits Alex Cox, director of movies such as *Repo Man* and *Sid and Nancy*. "It requires the same amount of energy as a film, but only takes two days. Then it's usually pulled out of your hands and reedited."

So why is Cox hanging around seedy parts of New Jersey filming chickens, peacocks, assorted reptiles, charred underwear, Debbie Harry, and Iggy Pop? "I was honored to be involved in such a project," he explains.

Cox is one of several directors—including Jim Jarmusch, Jonathan Demme, and Wim Wenders—of *Red Hot and Blue*, a 90-minute television special comprised of pop artists' renditions of the late theater and film lyricist Cole Porter's songs. All profits from the project will go to international AIDS charities. Participating performers include Erasure, Sinéad O'Connor, Tom Waits, U2, and the team of Debbie Harry and Iggy Pop.

"Iggy had always wanted to make a video with animals, and Debbie had always wanted to publicly burn lingerie," says Cox. "So I let them." He describes the resulting video for the duo's "Well, Did You Evah!" as a "macabre microcosm of human life—a rather cynical meditation."

"It's a crazy, abstract thing," adds Debbie Harry. "A lot of fun for a great cause." *Red Hot and Blue* is scheduled to air December 1 at 11:30 P.M. on ABC.



Debbie Harry and Iggy Pop: video date of the year

Mark Blackwell



High in Ten City: from left, Byron Burke, Byron Stingily, and Herb Lawson.

## TEN CITY: SPACE AGE BAPTISTS

Originally called Ragtyme, Ten City derived their current name from the word intensity. They wanted a name that would describe a utopia: Take out the *in* and break up the *tensity* and you get Ten City—a place to dance, a sanctuary, a world that evokes images of careening, jacking bodies in motion. Not that this house music-derived group makes songs that constantly shout out, "Jack your body." Even if they are produced by Marshall Jefferson, Chicago's king of jacking. "You'll never hear that phrase in one of our songs," says vocalist extraordinaire Byron Stingily. "We put the spirit back into house music."

Whether singing about love, as they did on their first LP, *Foundation*, which provided clubbers with "Right Back to You," "That's the Way Love Is," and "Devotion," or branching out into the concerned state-of-the-world stuff on the new album, *State of Mind*, Ten City manages to combine the user-friendly ease of old disco and R&B with the intensity of contemporary house. "I consider us more to be an R&B group in the tradition of Harold Melvin and the Blue Notes," says Stingily.

Because Ten City are a band rather than a group of technicians, the groove is in the heart. So are the lyrics. Some of the new cuts—specifically "Superficial People"—look at the world with the same kind of uplifting hope and faith that emitted from the best early Earth, Wind and Fire. Says Stingily, "We want people to feel our songs as well as dance to them."

Scott Foulson-Bryant

When Robin Salmon was a kid attending one of South Africa's exclusively white schools in the Orange Free State, his parents were running an integrated Outward Bound type camp. The government pressured Salmon's family about this practice until they eventually had to move to the United States, where they started a similar camp in Texas.

"We lived on a big cowboy ranch," he says, reminiscing, "but one day for no reason I went out and bought a guitar instead of a new saddle."

Moving to Colorado after high school, he hooked up with Bob Barleen, who was playing bass in a band

## ROOTS OF EVIL

**See No Evil's Robin Salmon has seen a lot since his origins in South Africa's Orange Free State.**

called the Barleen Family Country Music Dinner Theater. Along with Barleen's drummer friend James Hendrick, they started a band and moved to Austin, Texas, in search of the fabled

music scene

"By the time we got there in 1985, it was all over," Salmon says. "It's always like that. A year later we moved to New York and it was the same thing. The only place we could play was CBGB."



But that was enough. Adding keyboardist Kol Marshall, they recorded their first album in 1989, dubbing themselves See No Evil. And following a great deal of critical acclaim, the band has just released its second album, *Songs*.

After the long road from the Orange Free State to the Big Apple, does Salmon ever desire to revisit his roots?

"Definitely not," he answers. "I have fond memories of South Africa because I was just a kid then, but I'm sure they would be destroyed if I went back now."

Mark Blackwell

# Very Smart.



There you are at the library. Or on a "no-radio" beach. You could slip away for a quick music break. Or, simply slip a CD into this Magnavox Personal Portable CD Player.

It's just a little larger than the compact discs it plays. So lightweight, it's hard to believe the big CD sound. Not surprising, it's from the inventors of CD technology. And wait'll you hear what else

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# A GRIPPING TALE

Influenced by the likes of Patti Smith and Throwing Muses, the Heart Throbs stand in marked contrast to British indie pop's current obsession with dance music.



a sound which has been called "Fleetwood Mac in a freeway pileup."

The Heart Throbs have nothing in common with the imminent invasion of laddish Anglo-pop you'll soon be enjoying/enduring. They prefer intensity to the "un tense" good vibes of the Stone Roses and Happy Mondays. And they scorn the current trendiness of drugs like Ecstasy.

"My biggest influences are love and fear," says Rose. "Love and fear alter your perceptions far more than any drug." Adds Stephen, "The British music scene is far too healthy. Everything is so joyful, but it's all so inane. There should be more ennui, disillusion, and disease in music."

Be sure to catch the Heart Throbs' contagious pop.

Simon Reynolds

The Heart Throbs are no strangers to controversy. The London-based group's 1989 single "Blood From a Stone" created a stir with its photo of singer Rose Carlotti, which reminded many of the infamous nude shot of Christine Keeler (the '60s good time girl whose carnal liaisons with a British minister and a Soviet diplomat inspired last year's movie *Scandal*).

Now the Heart Throbs are raising eyebrows with the title of their debut album, *Cleopatra Grip*—an obscure slang term for the tightening of the female love muscle during sexual intercourse. "Elektra anticipates problems racking it in K mart," says keyboardist Stephen Ward.

But the Heart Throbs don't want to titillate so much as provoke. "Blood From a Stone" was the world's first menstruation-blues anthem, while *Cleopatra Grip* is intended as "a gesture against the phallic imagery that dominates rock'n'roll."

"When women confront eroticism in an open way, they're usually considered quite threatening," says Carlotti. "Sinéad O'Connor's had problems with that. My songs deal with the same kind of feelings as hers—rage and revenge, the dark side of relationships, the gray area where love turns to hate."

The Heart Throbs are part of a British genre of bittersweet, poisoned pop in which contradictions are perfectly encapsulated in a name like My Bloody Valentine. The tradition was more or less started by Jesus and Mary Chain, and Rose admits that their formula ('60s pop structures vandalized by noise) was a prime influence when the band started four years ago. What sets the Heart Throbs apart, though, is that they've given their indie pop a coat of AOR gloss,

Deee-Lite adore him and Manchester's Hacienda club wants him. There is a stack of work requests bulging in the breast pocket of Captain Whizzo, the man who looks like Father Time, but is Father Light, king of the so-called psychedelic light show. Using what he calls a "kick-started, wood-burning light show"—overhead slide projectors, hand-painted paper plates for spinning wheels, and hand-painted slides—Whizzo is all the rage of the neopsychedelic, eco-soul kiddie crowd.

A 25-year veteran of light shows, Whizzo made his reputation with Hot Tuna and the Doobie Brothers, not to mention impromptus with Hendrix, the Who, and Janis Joplin. But as Lady Miss Kier, Deee-Lite's lead singer, says, "We love a collage of colors, images, and time. We also love bubbles, butterflies, spirographs, holograms, and Captain Whizzo's light collages."

## PSYChedelic SOLUTION

Are his fans truly hippies without irony? Whizzo himself is bemused: "I didn't understand the hippies the first time around," he says. "Maybe I'll catch on this time. Back then it was weird. When people were doing LSD, they'd come up to me and say, 'Far out! You must be God.' Now they assume the lights are computer generated. They think I'm the DJ. When they see I'm doing the lights, they still say, 'Far out!'"

"I call it painting with light," says Whizzo. Call it light-years ahead. He's been seeing one of his age-old techniques—scratching emulsion off old film and painting over it—all over MTV. "Yeah, 1980 to 1985 were real skinny years," says Whizzo. "With this resurgence era, I can expand and create more. Hopefully I won't be cast aside again."

Jill Pearlman

An underground hero of the '60s counterculture, Captain Whizzo and his amazing

light shows

are now

back in vogue.



# DRUMMING UP BUSINESS

Teenage drummer Larry Wright is still playing in the streets, but bigger things lie just around the corner.

Many a star is born and many die under the lights of Broadway, and right now drummer Larry Wright, a 15-year-old Harlem kid who performs for his audiences on a plastic bucket, is hovering somewhere in between.

Wright, whose drumming started in the bathroom of his mother's Harlem apartment with a pair of toothbrushes, moved to Times Square, Penn Station, and the caverns of New York's subway system when he was 14. Since then he has been discovered by music-industry big shots who have shown an interest in his raw yet promising talent.

Clips of Wright banging the bucket can be seen in videos by Fine Young Cannibals, Jane Child, Phil Collins, and in a new Levi's commercial by Spike Lee.



Wright opened for John Lurie at a December 1989 concert in Stuttgart, Germany. And following a public-television documentary on Wright, inquiries poured in from the likes of Max Roach, Art Blakey, Johnny Carson, and David Letterman. Wright's manager is negotiating with Art Blakey's manager to see if an apprenticeship relationship can develop to help Wright improve his skills on traditional drums. (The buckets Wright uses have stored everything from plastering compound to pickles.)

But such media exposure means little in the day-to-day struggle for cash. Wright brings home \$100 to \$200 for each of the street gigs he performs three or four times a week. Although his mother was shot and killed in August in their crack-infested neighborhood, Wright, now living with his grandmother, continues to go out playing to bring home money.

On an 80-degree Friday night in Times Square, Wright is playing jazz, Latin, hip hop, and African beats for a crowd of theatergoers, street people, homeboys in gold chains, and girls in gold hoops and '60s 'dos. His torso is shining with sweat as the beat reaches a dizzying climax. When it's over the bucket is turned over and passed around for donations.

Still recovering from the show, Wright says he would love to work with his biggest influence, Max Roach. He wants "to be successful," but he will never forget the streets and will never stop playing there.

Joanne Furio

ANDRE GROSSMANN

DAVID LEE



*Hint. Hint.*

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# FLASH

## NEWS SPECIAL

When George Bush reinvigorated the Federal drug war in his September 1989 televised speech, he revived an older drug war ambition: the attempt to eradicate the culture of marijuana. This attack is not on the violent crack and heroin trade that continues to ravage poor inner-city neighborhoods, or on the public-health problem of addiction, but on homegrown pot, its consumption, and its culture.

At the center of this attack is *High Times* magazine. A product of the drug culture of the late '60s, *High Times* has survived in more conservative times as a cross between the Burpee seed catalogue and a Freak Brothers comic book. But even as it mellows—its current editorial policy frowns on cocaine use—*High Times* has remained a magazine about drug use. The ads for grow lamps, legalization politics, and the bud-of-the-month centerfold are as nauseating and offensive to a drug warrior as *Hustler* is to a fundamentalist, or as the *Revolutionary Worker* is to a cold warrior.

On October 26, 1989, Operation Green Merchant went down. The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), in concert with state and local police, visited homes and gardening stores. The shipping lists of merchants advertising in *High Times* were used to direct police to suspected pot growers, and roughly 1,200 names were taken from 20,000 gardening store customers. (Actions were eventually brought against approximately 200 of them.) That afternoon, according to executive editor John Holmstrom, *High Times* received hundreds of phone calls canceling close to two-thirds of the magazine's ads.

Joseph Huberman of North Carolina, who unlike an estimated 50 million Americans has never smoked pot, was one of those whose houses were visited by the police in late October 1989. He allowed the search of his

home by "consent," a legal search that requires no warrant if there is agreement from the searched party. Their suspicion, the police said, came from an impeccable source."

The impeccable source turned out to be the DEA, which had gotten Huberman's name from UPS shipping records of a gardening store that happens to advertise in *High Times* magazine. Huberman had ordered from the same ad, but in a different magazine: the *American Orchid Society Bulletin*.

Gardening stores were also raided. According to the DEA, a "total of 65 stores are under investigation. This represents the first phase of a comprehensive attack against proliferation of indoor marijuana cultivation in the United States."

One proprietor, "Jim," still awaits return of merchandise and business records, and customers that the DEA scared away. The DEA got a search warrant premised on the hypothesis that expressions Jim used in his hy-

abridged and the police work fails to produce viable prosecutions.

Last May, the New York offices of *High Times* were served with a New Orleans grand jury subpoena, demanding access to virtually all of their records, including names and addresses of contributors. The ostensible purpose was to extradite an advertiser, Neville Schumacher of the Dutch Seed Bank, from Australia for mailing marijuana seeds into America, but prosecutor Larry Benson has said that "everyone at *High Times* should consider himself or herself a target." The prosecutor's request ignored long-standing Justice Department guidelines prohibiting such actions against news organizations without

poena records on employees."

The DEA answers *High Times*'s charges of harassment ominously: "There is no such thing today as a casual or innocent use of illegal substances. Users are going to be held accountable."

While the DEA intimidation is scar-

# HIGH NOON FOR



droponic sales pitch to an undercover cop were "code words" for marijuana. The search was fruitless.

When the wide net turned up an actual pot grower, the questionable searches resulted in few, if any, actual convictions, as in the case of Mark Campbell. On the basis of UPS records of a gardening store that advertises in *High Times* and electric bills, later found to have been obtained without warrant, a judge issued a search warrant. The trial judge was forced to dismiss the charges based on a lack of probable cause, even though the police found 50 one-inch pot plants and nine larger plants during their illegal search of Campbell's property. Campbell's charges on possession, possession with intent to sell, endangering the welfare of minors, and operating a drug factory were dropped, but not before he was suspended from work for eight months without pay while incurring legal fees of over \$12,000 and threats of foreclosure on his home. "They tried to ruin me," says Campbell.

The DEA tactics so flagrantly violate accepted standards of police behavior and civil liberties that the goal of Operation Green Merchant appears to be harassment and intimidation of the marijuana culture, even when individual privacy rights are

the approval of the Attorney General. The Justice Department said the guidelines did not apply, because the subpoenas were "demands for purely commercial or financial information unrelated to the news-gathering function." Arguing on First Amendment grounds, *High Times*'s lawyer Michael Kennedy succeeded several weeks later in limiting the subpoena to commercial dealings with the Dutch Seed Bank.

Editor in chief Steve Hager complains that "every time we build up an advertising base, they build up pres-

ing a lot of people, it is emboldening others. *High Times* has showed up on *NBC Nightly News* and in the *Wall Street Journal* as a wounded victim of the government's desperate attempts to drive workaday drug use further underground and to silence critics of the drug war. The media attention has given *High Times* the chance to raise questions about our archaic drug-enforcement policy and, sometimes, even to propound their petrochemical conspiracy theory. (*High Times* believes that oil companies have a vested interest in

# HIGH TIMES

**The DEA takes on homegrown pot, individual privacy, and freedom of the press.**

sure. The first advertising base was the bong and cigarette-paper people. They were all harassed out of the magazine in the late '70s. [The Government] also made it difficult for us to distribute. The two elements of choking advertising and distribution are old techniques, but this is new twist, coming into the office to sub-

keeping hemp—an alternative fuel source—(illegal.) Thanks to the DEA, *High Times*'s struggle to survive has made it more visible, vibrant, and relevant than it has been in a generation.

Todd Berman  
and  
Nathaniel Wica

# Flavor happens.

Nothing's happening. You're bored. You try  
a Merit Ultra Light. WHOA! You're getting real flavor from  
an ultra low tar cigarette! You light up another Merit. WHAT THE?  
It happens again. Is this mystical or what? Hardly.  
It's Enriched Flavor™ something only Merit has.  
Happens all the time.

Enriched Flavor™ ultra low tar. A solution with Merit.



## Merit Ultra Lights

**SURGEON GENERAL'S WARNING: Smoking Causes Lung Cancer, Heart Disease, Emphysema, And May Complicate Pregnancy.**

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5 mg "tar," 0.5 mg nicotine av. per cigarette by FTC method



# FLASH



## DrugAlert

SherTest Corporation is marketing a home version of a spray-on drug detection devices used by the Coast Guard and customs officials. Just wipe a clean cloth over a surface suspected of having residual traces of drugs and spray it with one of the cans included in the DrugAlert "system." Detects marijuana, hashish, cocaine, crack, or PCP.

Also included is a preachy self-help book, *Not My Kid: A Parent's Guide to Kids and Drugs*, a "Drug Free House" poster, and a referral number for drug treatment programs. We can't wait to spray each other's desks down. \$49.95, including postage, from SherTest, 475 Tuckahoe Rd., Yonkers, NY 10710.



## Large Condoms

The evolution of packaging techniques has now outpaced human evolution with Trojan's introduction of a new line of large condoms. (Their slogan, America's Largest Selling Condom Is Now Larger.) Just when we'd finally gotten over the embarrassment of buying prophylactics over the counter, now some of us have to sheepishly ask for the "small" ones. For comparison's sake, check out the life-size Penises of the Animal Kingdom poster, which includes the helical pig penis and the jointed porpoise penis. Poster, \$10 from Scientific Novelty, Box 673-H, Bloomington, IN 47402.



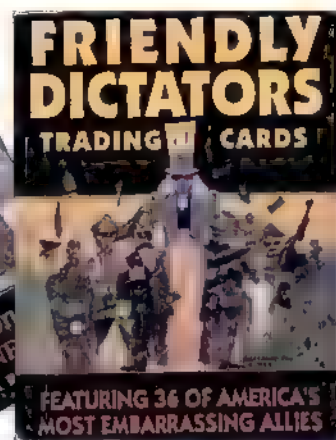
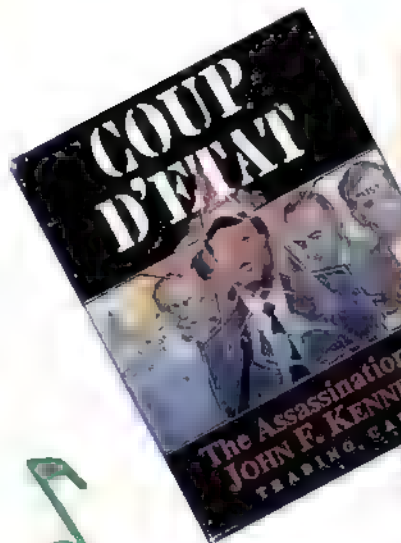
## Faxing Spooks

Do you become nauseated thinking about how your tax dollars finance death squads and dope dealers? We do. For quick temporary relief, you can fax a message to CIA headquarters in Langley, Virginia. We wanted to puke when we heard U.S. intelligence agencies had paid \$11 million to Noriega. Quickly we sent a fax to the agency (703-482-6790) requesting a subsidy of our own (somewhat smaller) drug transactions.



# THE COLD ROCK STUFF

THESE ARE A FEW OF OUR FAVORITE THINGS.



## Parking Lot Muzak

Find a parking lot in a shopping mall near any high school, and you're likely to discover packs of bored suburban kids. But not for long. Southland Corporation convenience stores like 7-Eleven and Hoagy's are using Muzak to keep their parking lots party-free zones. "We call it a nonaggressive deterrent," said Ron Conlin, one of the masterminds of the plan. "They don't want to hang out in a place that plays elevator music. I wouldn't want to either."



## Eclipse Trading Cards

Most trading cards feature overgrown boys playing sports. Eclipse cards showcase overgrown boys playing politics. Sets of 36 cards with names like Iran Contra Scandal and Bush League pair portraits with thorough research to detail the misadventures of William Casey and the Sunshine Band. Bill Sienkiewicz painted the two best sets. Friendly Dictators, starring America's strangest bedfellows; and Coup d'Etat, an attempt to untangle JFK's assassination. His visceral art transforms cancan into myth and vice versa. Each set, \$8.95 plus \$1.50 postage from Eclipse, P.O. Box 1099, Forestville, CA 95436.

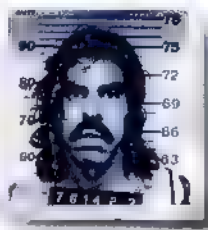
Compiled by Gavin Edwards, Jefferson Morley, Simon Reynolds, Lauren Spencer, Nathaniel Wice, Frank Owen, and Mark Blackwell.

## Amok Fourth Dispatch

After *Apocalypse Culture* and *Rats and Incendiary Tracts*, the latest from Amok Press is the *Amok Fourth Dispatch*, an gargantuan catalogue of extremist literature currently in print. Under section headings like Control, Sleaze, Scratch'n'Sniff, and Mayhem, you'll find an exhaustive/exhausting inventory of works both by and on anarchists, fascists, conspiracy theorists, perverts, muckrakers,

mystics, serial killers, self-mutilators, forensic scientists, occultists, eco-terrorists, ad infinitum, and probably ad nauseam. Amok Press has cottoned on to the lucrative fact that other people's manias and delusions provide vicarious thrills for coffee-table voyeurs. It's a sick world. An ideal Christmas present. \$8.95, including postage, from Amok, P.O. Box 861867, Los Angeles, CA 90086.

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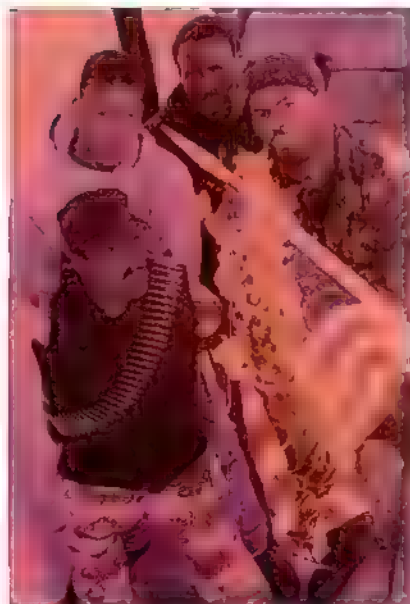




# BURN ON THE 4th OF JULY

**2 Black 2 Strong is a Harlem rapper who refuses to pledge allegiance to the flag.**

The broad stripes and bright stars of Old Glory are nothing sacred to rapper 2 Black 2 Strong. The lyrics and cover art for his single "Burn Baby Burn" with MMG (Mad Motherfuckin' Gangsters) make this all too clear.



"I don't see myself as a politician or activist," says 2 Black 2 Strong. "But when I heard all that controversy about flag burning, I was like, Fuck that, I'm burning the motherfucker."

The 22-year-old Harlem rapper emphasizes that the flag is just a piece of cloth, though he admits that it serves as a symbol—"of negativity and bullshit." His analysis: "Red is for the blood my people have shed, blue is for the blues they sang and the bruises where they were beaten, and you know what the white stands for."

Though he feels that many of America's problems stem from racism, he is quick to stress that this is not the entire picture. "This country fucks with everybody," he explains. "We gotta realize who the enemies are and unite against them. They try to fool us by dividing us on racist lines or using hype like this flag thing to hide the real issues. Their flag is like a big stage curtain, draped down so we can't see what the hell is going down backstage. I say, let's burn it up."

Betsy Ross must be turning over in her grave

Mark Blackwell

Only Los Angeles could produce a band like Celebrity Skin. In a city where celebrity is both religion and life-style, this group is a decadent cartoon. The band takes pop-rock archetypes—everything from bubble-gum melodies to hardcore thrash metal—mutates them in their own image, regurgitates them through a chaotic stage spectacle that's kinda like vaudeville on LSD.

Aside from the Kiss-like fireworks, no two Celebrity Skin shows have ever been the same. The band members often resemble derelict bag ladies in drag, but that image can encompass anything from bassist Tim Ferris's green dreadlocks to his body-painted "psychedelic zebra" look. Whatever the case, the energy is always intense, and Celebrity Skin manage to destroy all sense of rock nostalgia in the process.

Celebrity Skin were considered a local joke upon formation three years

## ROCK'N'ROLL DISGRACE

**A joke band defies detractors to become essential listening. Only in L.A.**

ago "We got together because we all shared the same sense of humor," says drummer Don Bolles, who used to pound the skins for seminal hardcore unit the Germs. "I just found four other people who wouldn't beat me up for looking the way I do."

They were banned from every single

club in Hollywood ("We were supposedly a disgrace to rock'n'roll," recalls Bolles), but both the clubs and critics changed their tune when Celebrity Skin became the biggest non-metal draw in L.A., attracting a mixture that includes punk rockers, headbangers, the art crowd, and even preppies.

Despite constant rumors to the contrary, Celebrity Skin have yet to nab a major record deal. "The problem is they don't know how to categorize us because we're not like any other band," says singer Gary Jacoby of the local A&R reps. "They don't know what to



# Miles on Film

In Paris to shoot *Dingo*, his first feature film (due out in the U.S. the beginning of next year), Miles Davis is lounging in a suite fit for an African king at the Concorde Lafayette Hotel. The royal hermit—a.k.a. the Prince of Silence—takes his castle with him. Custom-made clothes, bags from designer shops, and sound- and image-reproducing devices are strewn about. Home is wherever he checks in.

Davis has often objected to the clichéd roles offered black film actors, although he did play a pimp in an episode of *Miami Vice*.

It's hard to imagine him animated—he didn't have a band called *Birth of the Cool* for nothing—but he's relatively demonstrative describing Billy Cross, the character he plays in *Dingo*. In the movie, Billy, a trumpet player, meets a ten-year-old in the outback of Australia when his plane breaks down, and Billy tells the boy to look him up if he ever makes it to Paris. "Twenty years pass and this kid comes to Paris," says Davis. "He plays trumpet now. He's been practicing every day. He wants to find out if he's good enough."

Director Rolf de Heer was on the point of signing Sammy Davis, Jr., for the role before the entertainer grew terminally ill. Then a friend came up with the idea of using Miles Davis. The thought had never occurred to him. He says he was only vaguely familiar with his music, but knew his reputation, "which wasn't good." But a number of people were "keen on Miles, so I met him and decided to take the risk because I saw that if we could pull it off he'd burn the place up."

The musical Miles Davis has been known to earn applause for his manipulation of silence. He does not fill space to prove how smart and proficient he is. "Don't play what's there," he has said, "play what's not there."

De Heer describes Davis the actor: "His sense of timing is phenomenal. You start to feed him his following line because he seems to have forgotten it. But then it comes out at just the right time and you're left with a mouthful of words you don't need."

Mike Zwerin

Miles Davis goes to the movies.



do with it, so they're afraid to have it in their houses." Nonetheless, earlier this year the band released a four-song EP called *S.O.S.* (including their nifty cover version of the title cut, originally by Abba) on Triple X, the same label that introduced Jane's Addiction to the world. Celebrity Skin were also featured on an episode of *thirtysomething* as the "weird band" that Melanie Mayron's younger lover takes her to see.

But what if the A&R execs never do catch on to Celebrity Skin's mixture of the New York Dolls-meet-early-Mothers of Invention (and so on)? "We'll just keep doing what we're doing," says Bolles. "What else could we possibly do? Besides, we believe people will eventually come around to us. After all, there are freaks everywhere."

Especially in L.A.

Bill Holdship

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# FLASH

With the success of  
**Black Box, Snap,**  
**Technologic, and**  
**Madonna's**

**NORTH AMERICA:** American record companies are largely afraid of house music. Rather than signing acts like Mike "Hitman" Wilson (who just got hooked up with Arista U.K.), they wait until tracks become established import best sellers. In the meantime, we listen to "Vogue" and other remixed B sides of lame-stream artists that have been fashionably house-fied.

**Chicago:** The home of house music, where early innovators such as transplanted New York DJ Frankie Knuckles (who played at local club The Warehouse, from which house music is said to take its name), Marshall Jefferson (who wrote "Move Your Body" and later started the acid-house craze), Rocky Jones (founder of the DJ International label), and Steve "Silk" Hurley ("Jack Your Body") first developed the music in the mid-'80s with a host of others. One of Jefferson's goals is to make his lush, string-laden "deep" house as moody and climactic as Led Zep and Yes. Although home to Ten City, Sterling Void, Daryl Pandey, Jamie Principle, Farley Jackmaster Funk, Joe Smooth, Liz Torres, Lil' Louis ("French Kiss"), Adonis, Robert Owens, Mr. Fingers, Fingers, Inc., DJ Pierre, Mike "Hitman" Wilson, the delightfully pornographic Candy J ("Sweet Pussy Paoline") as well as Mr. Lee, Fast Eddie, Tyree, and other originators of the rap-house hybrid, "hip-house," Chicago is—in the eyes of some insiders—past its prime, suffering from Dodge City business ethics among labels and resentment toward the spread of house to other locales. Early house legend Keith "Jack Master" Farley released "You Ain't Really Hot," but as one expert noted, "There's no secret to making great house records—it's not as if only people from Chicago can do it."

**Detroit** is where the way up tempo, abstract, largely instrumental "techno" sound was crafted by, among others, Juan Atkins (who did Cybertron's "Cear" in '82) and Kevin Saunderson of the now-defunct KMS Records, who reportedly resents the co-opting of his sound by British and other imitators. Derrick May of Transmat records, labels like Metroplex and Gherkin and artists like Inner City, Model 500, Reese & Santoni (a Saunderson side project), Blake Baxter, Rhythm Is Rhythm, Octave 1, and Sunday are some of the old and new talent produced by the Motor City. Some accuse Detroit artists of having a dated sound and a bad attitude.

**New Jersey** clubs like Zanzibar, DJs like Tony Humphries, labels like Mov'n, Bassment, Ace Beat, and Crazy Rhythms, production companies like Smack and Backroom, producer/artists like Blaze, unreleased cult hits like Ceiba's "Love So Special," and above-ground acts like Jomanda (a cross between Joanne and Amandal, Adeva (who acts like Grace Jones, and whose real name is Pat, covers Aretha Franklin's "Respect"), Sybil, Valerie Ingram, Bas Norr, the Burrell Twins (who attribute their success to kung fu), Jocelyn Brown, former sociology student Precious, and K.C. Flight (who claims, much to the dismay of Chicagoans, to have originated hip-house) have made Jersey a major center of house activity.

**New York:** According to one commentator, "All the biggest DJs don't think that the latest British house crazes like Sheffield's "techno" will catch on here." Otherwise respected DJs like Dave Morales ("excellent stuff but a *Billboard* reporter and corporate figure"), Frankie Knuckles ("only plays deep house"), Tony Humphries ("owns the radio"), and even Deee-Lite's Super DJ Dmitry ("three months behind on his records") come in for drubbings at the hands of young upstarts. Also holding back the spread of the latest house grooves is the lack of quality Ecstasy in Gotham—and the proliferation of dirty dealers peddling bogus wares. Nevertheless, the scene has a rich history (Larry Levan, Paradise

Garage, The Loft) and is loaded with talent like Kraze (consisting of Richard Jean Laurent, his two sisters known as Moonfou, and an ex-boyfriend of Madonna's), who had a hit with the wonderfully obnoxious "Shut Up" and are about to drop their debut album. Also in the know are artists like Palace D., Larry Tee, DJ Smash, Jay Williams (who has a four-octave voice and a hit called "Sweet"), Wendell Williams, Sex-o-matic (who has a cut called "Wake Up and Smell the Pussy"), Seduction, Bad Behaviour, Revelation, Dance Syndication, New Rhythms, 33 1/3 Queen (who, like a lot of people, borrow from A Guy Called Gerald), Logic, Chapter One, Love Child, Brooklyn's Joey Beltram (who has a hard Belgian sound), and the Major Problems. Important as we are labels like Nu Groove, Strictly Rhythm, Atmosphere, and Craig Kallman's Big Beat DJ associations like Brand-X; and producers like Justin Strauss, Galt "Sky" King, David Cole and Robert Cliviles (one of the few production teams that can write good songs), Mark Kamins, Moby Hall (who uses keyboards Adamski-like), Jared Hoffman, the legendary Shep Pettibone, and Brooklyn trouble-maker Frankie Bones (not to be confused with Knuckles). Right now New York is reportedly into "the smooth stuff," which is replacing hard stripped-down beat tracks. Some hope that the positive vibe of house and Ecstasy will overtake the city's hip hop/coke-crack attitude. According to club maven Ruza Blue has started "E' Is for Everybody" raves at the Palladium on Friday nights and imported everyone from A Guy Called Gerald to Black Box for the occasion.

**Washington/Baltimore:** According to Washington's 12" Records, Baltimore has the slightly more happening scene, featuring a more progressive sound and new performers like Basement Boys, Nu Marx, and Ultra Nate. The nation's capital boasts important figures like Doug Lazy and Vaughan Mason, clubs like the Ritz and Kilimanjaro's, remixers like

# HOUSE MUSIC MAP OF

Mandril, and DJs like Sam Burns.

**Philadelphia:** The '70s soul sound of the City of Brotherly Love was a favorite of the early Chicago DJs, who would spin, remix, update, and eventually imitate the lushness of favorites like MFSB ("Love Is the Message"), First Choice ("Let No Man Put Asunder"), the O'Jays, Three Degrees, and Double Exposure. MFSB's mythic drummer, Earl Young, played on the first Ten City album, and First Choice vocalists Rochelle Fleming is recording again with New Jersey's Blaze.

**Los Angeles:** "Everyone keeps telling me it's not going to happen," says one DJ about the L.A. scene, but 3,000 people recently broke into a downtown warehouse and had a British-style rave, fueled by much higher quality Ecstasy than you find on the East Coast. Local DJ Marques Wyatt (who runs the roving rave Mac's Garage), just released a single under the name NPG (New Power Generation) and is planning another under the name Phantom with the renowned Eddie Fowlkes. Wyatt jokes that "there is a scroll of guys saying they're working on music," but the only other guy doing it is Michael Moore. Wyatt predicts, however, that by next summer, with the help of local DJs like Steve LeCair, tens of thousands of dudes and dudettes will be flocking to the fields, deserts, and the industrial wastelands in and around L.A. for parties thrown by clubs like OAP (One Almighty Party), Moonshine, and Alice's House.

**The Rest of the U.S.A.:** According to house-music authority Brian Chin, the Southwest is more into the industrial alternative dance trax like those purveyed by Dallas's MC 900 Ft. Jesus. Meanwhile, in Miami, Deep State is making good, deep house, but the rest is "a bad interpretation of house," according to one local DJ. Nonetheless, a few Fort Lauderdale artists





dents are reportedly making music that's comparable to the Brits and Italians but have yet to secure a deal

**Canada:** Toronto's Big Shot Records was the home of producer Andrew Komms and had a hit with Donna's "Come Get My Love" before falling on hard times. Even so, DJs like Chris Sheppard, the Demopulous Brothers, Deco and the Assoons, clubs like Go-Go, Stilllife and RPM, and after-hours warehouse raves bode well for the future

**UNITED KINGDOM:** When disco died in the U.S., it carried on in England, where there is—especially in the north—an appreciation for fast American black music. By 1986, house music—which many see as stripped-down disco—was being imported from Chicago and compiled on LPs put out by London Records. Soon after the Brits began making it themselves. In 1987, "70s fever gripped London and beats got slower, funkier, trendier. Consequently, house migrated up to Scotland and northern cities like Manchester, where faster, gay-derived stuff is preferred. The rest—the importation of Ecstasy, out-breaks of acid house, stagings of all-night parties or "raves," and the inevitable police crackdown (one party thrower got ten years in the slammer)—is history.

**London:** Sly Stone would be proud because here in London everybody is a star—or at least a drum programmer, pirate/sampler, or synth-nerd. An estimated 70 to 80 independent singles are released each week, 80 percent of which are "house." In turn, 80 percent of these are "absolutely awful," according to one DJ. Regardless of oversaturation and a flood of DJ magazines, the scene still thrives, thanks to the efforts of clubs like Land of Oz, Wag, Heaven, The Milk Bar, and Camden Palace; labels like MCA, Big Life, FFR, Debut, Tam Tam, and Raw Bass; DJs like Chris Paul (signed to Tommy Boy), C.J. Mackin-

like Cabaret Voltaire are getting a second lease on life via the Sheffield house scene.

**EUROPE:** With the advent of Belgium's Techno-tronic and Italy's Black Box, American record companies are going so far as to hail the emergence of a new generation of "Euro-blacks."

**Italy:** The last to pick up on house and lamented by some as shameless copycats and regurgitators, the Italians have nonetheless come up with a flowing, player piano bass groove exemplified by Black Box, which also records under the name Starlight. They had 1989's biggest hit with "Ride on Time," which sampled the voice of disco diva Loleatta Holloway. Detractors of the group insist that Katrin, the black model who graces the cover of the group's *Dreamland* LP, is a man who lip-synchs. The entrepreneur of the whole scene, a man named Lombardi, was allegedly once caught with a warehouse full of bootlegged Billy Joel and Pink Floyd tapes. Irma, New Music, Groove Groove Meody, and Disco Magic are hot labels. Milano and Rimini are hip cities. Ricky, Luca, and Daviolo are hyped DJs, while the 49ers (not the football team), Suono Latino, K.K. Tronics, Soft House Company, Arkano d, Hysteria, Mysterious Electro Shock, Righera, Nove Centro, and Atahualpa are happening hopefuls.

**Belgium:** and its tinny sound which is more treble than bass was put on the map this year by Techno-tronic. Also the birthplace of "new beat" (a Euro version of acid house), Belgium boasts groups like Cee Jay, Cold Sensation, Jade 4U, Pulse, Digital Vamp, 101, and MC B Featuring Daisy Dee (who scored by snaking "This Beat Is Technotronic").

**Holland:** has one label (Go Bang!), one cool club (the Roxy), a cool DJ (Eddie Le Something or other), and groups like D Shake and G.T.O. (Greater Than One) that forge an avant-garde, techno-ambient fu-

**"Vogue" on the pop charts in 1990, house music is finally on the map.**

# THE WESTERN WORLD

tosh, Paul Oakenford, Danny Ramping, and Trevor Fung; remixers like former Killing Joke member Youth, as well as groups and assorted charlatans like keyboard whiz Adamski (whose being signed in the U.S. has reportedly "gone to his head"), keyboard madman Guru Josh ("a real cool guy who is actually into the music"), Hardcore Uproar, KLF, the Farm, Boneshakers, Jesus Loves You (Boy George's new band), and the Bocca Juniors.

**Manchester,** according to writer Jon Savage, is "dead now because rock bands have tried to approximate the dance sound." And if that hasn't killed the scene, then the empty platitudes of Factory Records supremo Tony Wilson (who came to the New Music Seminar in New York and screamed, "Wake up America, you're dead!") certainly will. Nevertheless, it's still the home of the famous Hacienda Club, FRO (Fuck Right Off) Records, and several artists like A Guy Called Gerald (whose real name is Simpson) and ambient-house masters 808 State (who were accused of stealing material from Gerald). Renowned DJs like Mike Pickering travel the globe, but also pick up bars along the way ("He's so boring," says one unimpressed NYC spinner).

**Sheffield,** which was big in the early-'80s with Human League and Heaven 17's electro sound, has replaced Manchester as the latest hot spot, featuring a "techno" sound derived from the Detroit brand of house. Warp and Waul Mr. Modo are happening labels, LFO and Tricky Disco are the most prominent groups, and other potential success stories include transplanted New Yorkers The Mystic Knights, the Forgemasters, STP Experience, Zoe, Dextrous, Left Field, Howl House, Testone, and the Orb (i.e., Billy Orbit), who reportedly coined the term "ambient house," which was the subtitle of his "A Huge Evergrowing Pulsating Brain That Rules From the Center of the Utraworld" single. Even early '80s casualties

sion. Also notable are cuts like "I'll Bass You" by Turntable Hype and "Dish and Tell" by House of Venus.

**Germany:** Though known for a more polished electro, Kraftwerk manlike sound, Germany is also home to Manuel Gottsching's "E2F4," one of the earliest ambient house records. Deskee's "Let There Be House" was a hit, as was "The Power" by Snap (featuring Penny Ford, who toured with Parliament as a 14-year-old, and Turbo B, formerly of the U.S. Army). "Cherry Lips" by Culture Beat, and the two-million seller by another transplanted military man, the half black, half American Indian Sydney Youngblood, were also gigantic. Berlin's Delkom and Ready Made, along with Westbam, Robotiko Rejektiv, Hubert Kah, Cybotec, Petra Company, FBI Pro, ect, Fancy, Bad Boys Blue, C.C. Catch, and entrepreneurs Bernhard Mikulski (owner of ZYX Records) and Dieter Bohlen also deserve mention.

**Spain:** Rau, Oreilana is the first artist of note to emerge with "The Real Wild House," which samples Iggy Pop and includes flamenco guitar. More important are the Balearic Islands, especially Ibiza, where working-class Britons like to dance their holidays away at clubs like Kgo, Hysteria, and Amnesia—and where they discovered Ecstasy, which was promptly smuggled back to Brighton.

**Scandinavia** is a favorite place for Britain's celebrity DJs to visit, and house fever has spread as far as Norway and Iceland.

Special thanks to Brian Chin, Jon Savage, DJ Money Penny, Ruza Blue, Street Sound magazine, and DJ John Hall for their invaluable assistance.

Rob Mack





# ARTISTS FAITH NO MORE OF THE YEAR

MEET HER BEES ADVISING Cass, render to take drugs, kill babies, and steal everything for wearing a shirt with multiple images of Jesus Christ jacking off for the SKIN. Love, shoot, or informing the audience at a Copenhagen rock festival that at that precise moment Lenny Kravitz ("the Jesus of hippies") is fucking Sinéad O'Connor ("the Virgin Mary") in the hospitality tent, Faith No More vocalist Mike Patton sure knows how to eke out an irreverent good time amid the grueling drudgery of life on the road.

After 14 months of continued touring—supporting acts like Aerosmith, Poison, Billy Idol, Voivod, Soundgarden, and Metallica—he's understandably a bit

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANTON CORBIJN.





twisted and not a little homesick

Therefore it seems perfectly natural that, sitting on the Faith No More tour bus on the outskirts of Washington, D.C.—with teenage girls banging drum tattoos of desire on the windows, eager to offer their favors to the 21-year-old heart-throb — our talk should turn to the topic of masturbation.

"Masturbation is a lot easier to do than relating to someone," says Patton. "It's like playing a video machine. You can relate to a machine a lot easier than a human being. You can just pound yourself for hours and hours and not think about it. With sex, no matter how great it is, there's always something missing." I ask Mike if he masturbates any less now that he has legions of girl fans eagerly offering themselves to him. "Not at all," he responds. "The only difference now is that I masturbate in front of people. There was this girl in Philadelphia—I hung out with her all day and we ended up in my room. I ended up masturbating while she watched." Safe sex? "No, not at all. It's entirely different. Masturbation is like this knot I have inside of me that I can't untie."

A five-hour drive north of San Francisco, among the California redwoods, is the coastal town of Eureka, the David Lynch-ville that Mike

Patton calls home. Eureka has recently been in the news as redneck loggers battle concerned environmentalists over the issue of deforestation. "The loggers there are fucking nuts," says Patton. "These people would be protesting, sitting up in the trees, and they'd fucking cut the trees down with the people sitting in them. It's great." As you might expect, Eureka is hardly a fun city. ("In Eureka," adds Patton, "we drink a lot of coffee if we think there's something worth staying up for.") Reading pornography is a major pastime, as is playing at the local water-treatment plant, jumping freight trains, and riding around town waving baseball bats at hippies.

To alleviate the boredom, Patton formed Mr. Bungle, which started out, he says, as "a Laurel and Hardy death-metal band" before becoming the porno-funkaters they are today. When he has time, Patton still sings with Mr. Bungle. The difference between the two bands, he says, "is that Mr. Bungle freely admit they like to masturbate. The best description of Mr. Bungle I've heard is from Warren Entner [Faith No More's manager, who also manages Faster Pussycat and



Mike Patton ponders the road ahead.

Quiet Riot]. 'I couldn't really relate to it,' he says, 'because it was like you were having an inside joke among yourselves.'

Our conversation is interrupted when Patton allows two fans to shelter from the rain on the tour bus. One of the girls proceeds to ask Patton to sign her butt. He politely declines.

FAN You are so awesome. I mean, shit, you're just so awesome. Can I have a hug?

PATTON A hug? What about a handshake?

FAN We love you so much. You're so awesome

PATTON Don't say that

FAN But you are. You're awesome.

PATTON (*Gelling irritated*): Tell me something I don't know. You've already said that.

FAN I love you. You're awesome. What are you doing after the show? Are you going to party?

PATTON What do you mean, party?

FAN Fucking everything, man.

PATTON: Fucking. That's what you really mean, that's what it all comes down to.

FAN Have you got any weed?

PATTON I only smoke crack.

FAN You're so awesome.

**If Faith No More are metal, it's metal without the male fantasies of omnipotence and invulnerability, metal without the L.A. glam sleaze, metal without the sword'n'sorcery imagery.**

"GODDAMN IT'S NOT RIGHT," exclaims Patton after the girls leave. "I've never had anyone look up to me and take what I say as gospel. Being so young, I don't know shut; I'm in no position to talk down to someone

"The kind of crowd we draw is—" he says, "I

"I just saw what I want  
for Christmas.  
And I bet he drinks Johnnie Walker Red"



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PIRAT



Faithless: clockwise from top left, Jim Morton, Bill Gould, Mike Patton, Mike Bordin, and Roddy Bottum.

don't know if *gullible* is the word, but—easy I step to one side of the stage and they go crazy. It's so simple. It's not as if I'm doing anything important. I mean these kids are like little lambs. All these girls screaming and wanting to sleep with me, it's got nothing to do with sex. It's like vampirism. I'm their transfusion. It's not erotic or sexual, it's cartoonish.

"I'm uncomfortable with being a pop star. When you walk down the street and people yell at you and try to grab your hair, it's not natural. We were doing an in-store appearance and someone grabbed my hat right off my head. That's not right. You don't do that to someone walking down the street, so why do that to me? And I lost it. Threw hot coffee in his face. He gave me my hat back."

IT'S TEMPTING TO LINK the rise of San Francisco's Faith No More to a phenomenon that has been increasingly evident throughout 1990—the decentralization of Planet Pop, the decline in the creative hegemony of the Los Angeles/New York/London axis and the subsequent rise of important provincial scenes in places like Manchester, Oakland, Seattle, and San Francisco. But, by their own account, Faith No More have little or nothing in common with the burgeoning Bay area funk thrash scene of Primus, Limbomaniacs, Psychofunkapus, etc.

"We didn't come up in the funk thrash thing," says dreadlocked powerhouse drummer Mike Bordin. "Maybe some people put us at the head of it, but

it's something we never championed. We never fit into any category. We weren't even involved in the bohemian clique because we were such a bunch of dirtheads—guys with rotten dreadlocked hair who smoked dope and didn't give a fuck. We liked to put our finger on the sore spot a little bit by not playing up to any clique or group."

Keyboardist extraordinaire Roddy Bottum

**"The kind of crowd we draw is—" Patton says, "I don't know if *gullible* is the word, but—easy. I step to one side of the stage and they go crazy. It's so simple. It's not as if I'm doing anything important. I mean these kids are like little lambs. All these girls screaming and wanting to sleep with me, it's got nothing to do with sex. It's like vampirism. I'm their transfusion. It's not erotic or sexual, it's cartoonish."**

agrees, saying, "For the most part when we started doing our thing in San Francisco, we were pretty much doing our best to fight against the scene."

"I don't think a band like Faith No More could

have come out of L.A.," says Billy Gould, Nietzsche scholar and FNM's bass player. "There are different motivations in San Francisco. Most musicians are really poor there, and there's not much prospect of life getting better for them. Greed doesn't motivate their approach to music as much as it does in L.A."

"It's a rainy city with a lot of European influences. But we were like, 'Fuck you, we're from California. We like the beach.' That was thought of as very uncool. I remember we got MTV because that was thought of as uncool as well. We lived in this house which we didn't clean once for a year and a half—clothes all over the floor. But we pooled our money and got cable television and MTV. We did it just to fuck everybody off. We started watching MTV so much that it became this thing that was real. People in San Francisco look down their noses at popular culture, but to us it's a weapon. I remember we played a club in San Francisco once where we did a perfect, note-for-note cover of Van Halen's 'Jump.' People hated it."

In their current live show, Faith No More feature the chorus of Public Enemy's "911 Is a Joke" during "The Real Thing," as well as full fledged covers of "Easy" by the Commodores and the Nestlé chocolate commercial (Sweet dreams you can't resist / NESTLÉ-S)

BILLY Crap commercialism as an art form is a wonderful thing. It's like you hear this song on the radio or in an advertisement and it sticks in your head. You just sort of accept the song because it's part of your life now. Why fight it. You end up liking it. You have to.

RODDY One of the things we've had to come to terms with this year is that the mass audience is not as cynical and bitter as we are. They don't find the same things funny as we do. I got onstage in Sydney and said, "Is it true that homosexuality is illegal in Australia? That's a shame, we won't be able to have any fun backstage now." And the audience was genuinely pissed off, saying shit like, "Fuck off, you faggots."

I think it's really comfortable for us to confuse our audience rather than leaving them with the feeling that they know what's going on. That's why we do the cover of the Commodores' "Easy." We used to do a cover of Black Sabbath's

"War Pigs" but we stopped because that's what the audience expected. Every time we played,



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# ARTISTS OF THE YEAR

I REALLY DIDN'T think I'd ever see her again, because the last time we visited wasn't very pleasant. But here I was, visiting Sinéad in her hotel room at the Omni Berkshire to get an update on Sinéad for SPIN's "The Year in Music" issue. Sinéad O'Connor: The Final Chapter. Round 15.

food looked like it had been licked from the plates, and Sinéad and Ciara were actively devouring all the rest of the comforts the hotel had to offer: cable TV with remote control, multiple-line telephones, the works.

Little Sinéad O'Connor, happy at last. Until she started reading the

leg of her tour.

"Hey Mom, when did you become a now happening lupster?"

"That's not the point. I just think it's scandalous that—"

Click.

The next time my mom called, it was to tell me about the row over An-

## SINÉAD O'CONNOR

"So, how is all this? Is it beyond your wildest dreams?"

"Yes, very much."

"You're a machine now, Sinéad."

"No, I'm not"—she pauses—"What makes you say that?"

"Well, you're a legend now."

"No, I'm not."

"Sure you are."

"And if I was, being a legend is not being a machine."

"Little girls don't run away from home and show up on my doorstep because I know an ordinary person. They show up on my doorstep because I know a legend: *you*. And if little girls are running away and showing up on my doorstep, it must be pretty bad for you."

"I didn't know about that happening. When did that happen?"

"About two weeks ago. I didn't touch her. She was 15."

"Good."

"All I could think of was going to jail."

"Good."

"And it would've been all your fault."

"It would not."

THE LAST TIME I'd seen Sinéad had been in early 1990, the beginning of the Year of O'Connor, and Sinéad was lying in bed at the Parker Meriden with her best friend from grammar school, Ciara O'Flannagan, talking on the telephone, watching music videos on the TV, reading a story I'd written on her. Her single "Nothing Compares 2 U" had just gone No. 3, on its way to No. 1, her second album, *I Do Not Want What I Haven't Got*, later held at No. 1 for eight weeks. She was on the way to becoming one of the biggest rock'n'roll stars in the world, but she looked more like a 12-year-old who'd skipped school and broken into the hotel. The room-service trays were piled everywhere, the

article

"Why did you have to put all this personal stuff in here?" she asked, in a voice that suggested I just ran over her teddy bear with an 18-wheeler.

I got flustered. I wanted to say I put all the personal stuff in because I wanted to; because that was the way I wrote. But I didn't. I decided to be tactful and said, "Because you're a rock star, and people are interested in you."

Sinéad looked up at me, going from marble to granite and said very flatly, "I am not a rock star."

On that note I left. I knew that if she didn't believe she was a rock star then, she was in for some difficult times ahead.

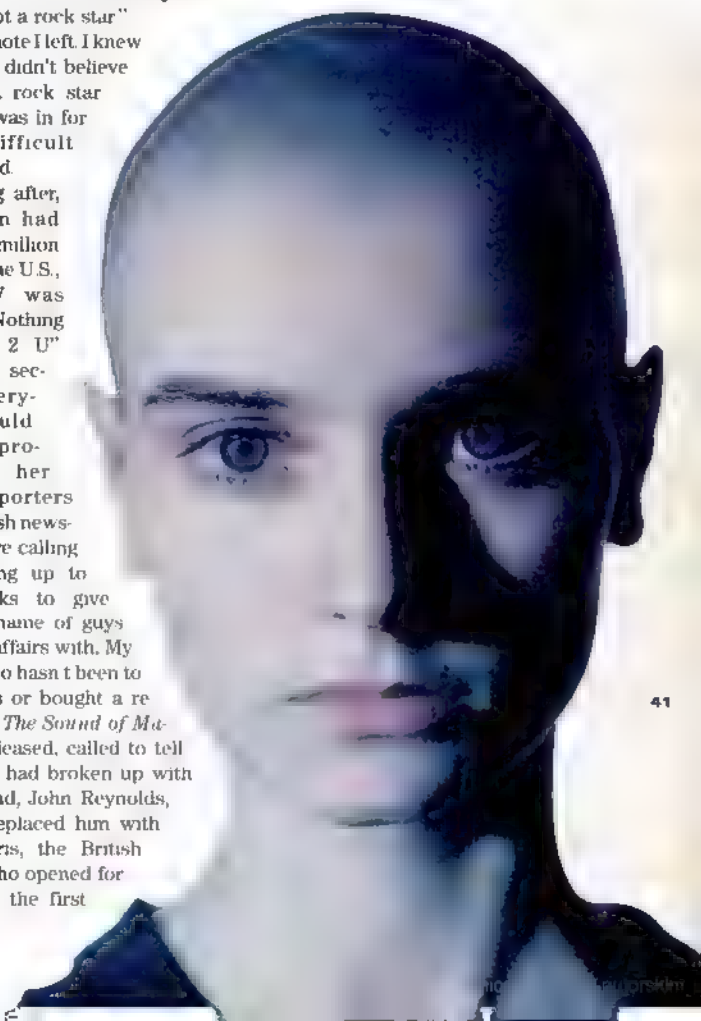
Not long after, the album had sold three million copies in the U.S., and MTV was playing "Nothing Compares 2 U" every five seconds. Everyone could finally pronounce her name. Reporters from English newspapers were calling me, offering up to 2,000 bucks to give them the name of guys she'd had affairs with. My mother, who hasn't been to the movies or bought a record since *The Sound of Music* was released, called to tell me Sinéad had broken up with her husband, John Reynolds, and had replaced him with Hugh Harris, the British pop star who opened for her during the first

drew Dice Clay hosting *Saturday Night Live* when Sinéad was scheduled to be the music guest. She had canceled because of Andrew's misogyny and racism.

"Well, it's nice to know she's kept her values," my mother told me, showing her support for Sinéad over Andrew.

"But Mom, I thought you didn't like her now because she was going out with a black guy?"

continued on page 96





JIM GREER'S 1990 TOP TEN:

1 Best Album: Teenage Fan Club, *A Catholic Education* (Matador).

2 Another Good Album: The Boredoms, *Soul Discharge* (Shimmy-Disc).

3 A Much Better Album Than I First Thought: Sonic Youth, *Goo* (DGC).

4 Best Concert: Soul II Soul in Tokyo, Japan, late June. Actually, the show wasn't that great, but I'd never been to Tokyo before.

5 Another Good Concert: Loop, CBGB, New York, NY, April or May. I remember being in the CBGB Pizza Boutique before the show. I remember drinking some beer. I don't remember much about the actual show, but all my friends said it was great.

6 Guest Editor of the Year: Bob Guccione, Jr. Occasionally we have to let him do something or he gets restless.

7 Most Interesting Non-Album: Guns N' Roses. Now you see it, now you don't. What's it up to now, a 15-record set?

8 Best T-Shirt: The one we had to airbrush out of the Faith No More cover photo. Let's just say it had something to do with the second coming of Jesus.

9 Yet Another Good Album: Neil Young, *Ragged Glory* (Reprise).

10 Best Drink: Hands down—the sea breeze. Tastes like it's good for you and, for all I know, it is.

TEN THINGS THAT MADE LAUREN SPENCER HAPPY IN 1990, IN NO PARTICULAR ORDER:

1 Faith No More. Yes, they rock the house the best, with Mike Patton acting just like someone's bratty kid brother.

2 The return of Masters of Reality. Just when I was giving up hope, they came back to show us all how rock'n'roll should be. It's about time.

3 Soundgarden. Especially live, there's something about those bare chests and yards of hair. I just can't explain it (at least not in print).

4 Michael Levine's photography. Coolness deluxe. Like being on acid without having to take it. Must be all those colors.

5 Mother Love Bone. Really, much attention has been given to the band only since the death of lead singer Andrew Woods, but this Seattle band really were a

JONATHAN BERNSTEIN You know, someone once said, "The blues ain't nothin' but the sound of a good man feelin' bad." The year 1990 saw the cumulative end result of a decade-long downer: This was the year Depeche Mode finally became *everyone's* favorite existential heroes.

They kept a hard-core audience of SoCal gals crying in the sunshine throughout the '80s, but this year it all

## DEPECHE MODE

changed. Throughout the country when bedroom doors slammed shut in unison, when faces were buried in pillows to muffle the sobs, when you couldn't find a partner for that suicide pact, there was only one soundtrack to murmur the pain. *Violator* became this generation's "You've Got a Friend." The Mode caught—maybe even went some way to creating—the national mood. Dread, doubt, uncertainty. Fear of self and surroundings. It was everywhere you turned; even Mariah Carey "suffered from alienation."

STEVEN DALY: Yo, yo, time out! Hold your water. Don't be giving me no transatlantic dissertations on our national mood. Besides, you *know* Depeche Mode. You remember their inauspicious rinky-dink beginnings as the Archies of the New Romantic bowel movement. You heard "People Are People," one of Dave's finest—

JB: Martin. One of Martin's finest. And it isn't. Martin L. Gore is at the top of his game when he's probing into the horrors of the flesh: "Strangelove," "Master and Servant," "Behind the Wheel"—

SD: Scared-stuff-of-sex songs whose videos are always mobbed with dissipated French models.

## This was the year that Depeche Mode finally became everyone's favorite existential heroes.

JB: With dead eyes and cruel mouths.

SD: But you know Depeche Mode's domestic standing: hardened pros grinding it out for the constituency.

JB: That's because we Britons are different; we suffer pangs of gender ambiguity before we've trained our first racing pigeons. American adolescents have never before had anyone out in the marketplace giving voice to their unspoken neuroses.

SD: Killing them softly with their song?



Depeche Mode: Maybe they should all be praying for time.

JB: Right. Depeche Mode becoming a stadium band is the most subversive thing that's happened in years. Rather than let the market change them, they've changed the market. They've forced the audience to accept them the way they are, and in doing so the audience has accepted *itself*. It's alright to be sensitive; to be different; to be *apart*. They've taken the whole rock outlaw ethos and turned it on its head. . . .

SD: But they dress just like rock outlaws.

JB: Exactly. That's so ironic.

SD: I don't get it. I thought Depeche Mode got to be a big stadium group by acting like a big stadium group.

JB: Exactly. *Acting*. That's so ironic.

SD: So when Andy's bumping and grinding—

JB: Dave.

SD: When Dave's going through his frontman paces he's actually—

JB:—simultaneously parodying and paying homage to a fast-decaying genre!

SD: Subtle. But I thought they were at their finest when probing into the horrors of the flesh. Now you tell me it's all irony.

JB: It's the music that matters. Music

for the masses. This is the band who've succeeded in their aim of bringing credibility back to the medium. Tell me you didn't like "Personal Jesus."

SD: I didn't like "Personal Jesus."

JB: Tell me you didn't like "Enjoy the Silence."

SD: I *loved* "Enjoy the Silence."

JB: There you are then.

SD: I loved it on all of New Order's albums, too. And another thing, Dave's vocals on that track—

JB: What about them?

SD: Nothing, -nothing. I'm just surprised to hear him singing, is all. He should do it more often. Nice vibrato, very Belinda Carlisle.

JB: She got it off Stevie Nicks—

SD:—who borrowed it from Marc Bolan.

JB: Who cares. It's not where you're from, it's where you're at. Whenever you feel the world's against you, whenever you spend days staring at the phone, whenever you think nobody'll ever understand you or your hair—"Reach out and touch faith."

SD: I feel so violated.

JONATHAN BERNSTEIN

AND

STEVEN DALY



SOMEWHERE IN THE WOODS between Lake Sunapee, New Hampshire, and 5610 Netherland Avenue, Yonkers, New York, where Steven Tyler grew up, Tyler—sober and drug-free—and Aerosmith are still touring. Tall trees step up to greet them. Small animals and insects call out their names. Steven and his gang used to stumble high on booze through these woods. Then Steven discovered rock'n'roll: the Everly Brothers and the Shirelles. He heard the music in the trees. It was mysterious, like water flowing upward. Steven decided to flow with it.

During the 1970s Aerosmith were like a geyser, according to a lot of metal bands of the '80s. Then around 1979, Steven, Joe Perry, and the band stopped flowing and everything fell

## AEROSMITH

apart. It took them ten years to get back on top.

*Pump*, their 15th album, is an Aerosmith classic, a combination of the Rolling Stones, Led Zeppelin, Martin Scorsese's *Mean Streets*, the Mercedes 210, the Dave Clark Five turtle-neck shirt, and the Beatle boot with the high heel and pointy toe—particularly the one Florsheim put out in 1968 that came up to the calf and had the biggest heel. Steven bought eight pairs of those because every time he'd go out with a girl she'd want his boots and he'd end up giving them to her.

*Pump* is not yet their biggest-selling

though he was probably not referring to the music so much as Steven's and Joe Perry's comeback from drugs.

Luckily, Steven and Joe both have their guardian angels watching over them (Steven's looks like Carly Simon). Their angels must have popped the Toxic Twins' cork, which is why their 1990 cup runneth over.

Other significant events that happened to Aerosmith this past year:

- Aerosmith's fan club, Aero Force One, launched a fan drive to have Aerosmith's old apartment at 1325 Commonwealth Avenue in Boston declared a landmark.

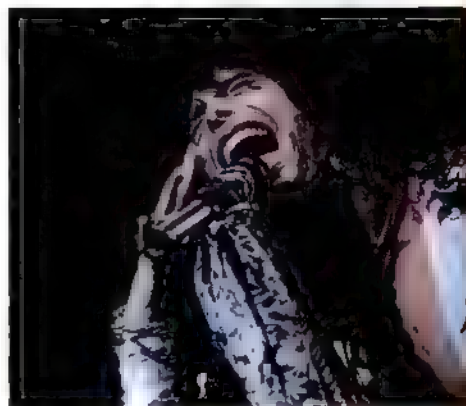
Aerosmith lived in apartment 2B in the early '70s, before their CBS contract. They always faced eviction because they spent what little money they had on Boone's Farm wine and blue crystal meth, which they kept in the refrigerator. It was the only thing in the refrigerator. Once Steven stole a two-pound steak from the supermarket by stuffing it down his pants. He swears it cooked by the time he got home.

- In a radio interview with Boston's WBCN at the Berlin wall during the front end of the *Pump* tour, Steven Tyler—the Edward R. Murrow of rock'n'roll—predicted the wall would come down in two days. As things turned out, the wall did come down two days later.

- On the *Pump* tour, Aerosmith took out the Black Crowes, Skid Row, and Joan Jett. The band informed Joan they wanted her on the tour by send-

*Cherry Pop Turt Comix*; he also retained his membership in A.A. and the Mile High Club

- This year Steven learned love is not a fuck flick and that unless you give it away, you won't get anything back



- Steven often asked himself, "If men bled, would tampons be free?"

- Both Steven and Joe bought stock in the Mustang Ranch, the big whorehouse in Nevada that recently went public.

- New York Met Dave Magadan listed Steven Tyler as one of three people he'd most like to sit next to in the dug-out—the other two were Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King, Jr.

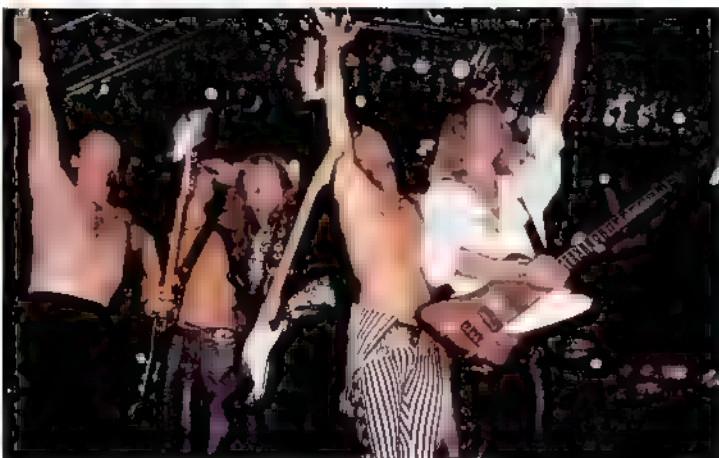
- Aerosmith ended their American tour by opening the Hard Rock Café in Las Vegas on a Saturday night in September while 3,000 to 5,000 of their fans rioted outside.

- Steven's biggest regret of 1990 was that Aerosmith didn't print the lyrics on the *Pump* album because of the PMRC. Their label (Geffen) was afraid that if the PMRC heard some of the lyrics—"Feeding the fucking monkey

**This year Aerosmith's fan club, Aero Force One, launched a drive to have the band's old apartment in Boston declared a landmark.**

on my back," where Steven says "fucking" like he never meant it before, or "Masturbating with a noose"—they'd get a bunch of mothers with picket signs marching around the record store at some mall and when the owners of the mall found out what the disturbance was about, they'd pull the record. That isn't good when you're in the business of selling records.

SCOTT COHEN



Aerosmith: Small animals and insects call out their names.

album, but combined with the tour, 1990 was Aerosmith's most successful year. It is the first time in the band's 20-year history that they received practically unanimous critical acclaim. Robert Hilburn of the *Los Angeles Times* called it "one of the most dramatic comebacks ever in rock," al-

ing a male stripper dressed as a gas station attendant, toting a gas can, to her hotel room in Minneapolis. When she opened the door, he said, "Welcome to the *Pump* tour," and proceeded to take off his clothes.

- Steven renewed his subscriptions to *Connoisseur*, *Berkeley Wellness*, and

motherfode of sound and fury. Here's hoping the remaining members will carry on the tradition in form.

4 Learning how to program a CD player. What can I say? I took my time on this one.

7 Things from San Francisco. The Bay area just looked better and better this year.

8 Dagood Slaughter. Not just a joint disease but a great band from, where else? San Francisco. Keep your ears open.

9 Belly-button rings. No I haven't got one, but they look cool anyway, and you never know when that piercing mood might strike.

10 Loud music. Basically encompasses everything mentioned above.

### FRANK OWEN'S 1990 TOP TEN

1 The Stone Roses at Spike Island. By the time I got to Spike Island, they were 30,000 strong. A working-class Woodstock.

2 The year of the Euro-black. Italy's Black Box, Germany's Snap, Belgium's Technotronic, Britain's Soul II Soul, and Caron Wheeler. The black diaspora has never sounded so vital.

3 Big Beat Records. Not a great year for house music in New York, but Craig Kallman's indie label kept the heat.

4 Honeymooning in Spain. Sun, sand, sex, sea, and some of the most elevated cultural conversations I've ever had at four in the morning in the bowels of a disco.

5 Deee-Lite at New York's Sound Factory. It was billed as "From Manchester With Love," a showcase featuring some of the best talent from that city. So how come a New York band blew everybody off stage?

6 Interviewing Mike Tyson. Contrary to popular opinion, a man of intelligence, wit, and insight.

7 Working on the Spike Lee edition. A publishing landmark.

8 Ice Cube, AmeriKKKa's Most Wanted. Thanks to Public Enemy's production team, the Bomb Squad, this is the most slamming hip hop record of the year.

9 About Face: Race in Postmodern America by Timothy M. Shah. A book that changed the way I thought about the world.

10 Denzig. Along with Faith No More, recaptured my waning interest in rock'n'roll.

### ALEC FOGG'S 1990 TOP TEN

1 Deluxe CD re-releases. Let



this is known as the year the Beach Boys' *Surfer's Safari* was deemed worthy of exhaustive liner notes.

2 Boogie Down Productions' *Beef...* Meaty beats for

10/11/12/13/14/15/16/17/18/19/20/21/22/23/24/25/26/27/28/29/30/31/32/33/34/35/36/37/38/39/40/41/42/43/44/45/46/47/48/49/50/51/52/53/54/55/56/57/58/59/60/61/62/63/64/65/66/67/68/69/70/71/72/73/74/75/76/77/78/79/80/81/82/83/84/85/86/87/88/89/90/91/92/93/94/95/96/97/98/99/100

3 Trump! O'ell. The author of *Surviving at the Top* finally painted himself into the woodwork.

4 Marcus Roberts. *Deep in the Shed*. Pure jazz for new people.

5 Leone Helmsley to Saddam Hussein: I wouldn't collage without fresh towels. Why should you?

6 The Richard M. Nixon Presidential Library. Contains facilities to examine the Watergate tapes for backwards masking.

7 Roger Waters. *The Wall: Live in Berlin*. Leave it to Waters to mistake reunification as just another excuse for public self-immolation.

8 Karen Finley. The only victim of NEA censorship to sell out New York's Lincoln Center. Maybe Andrew Dice Clay should get naked and cover himself in chocolate.

9 Robert Johnson. *The Complete Recordings*. Multiple takes and transcriptions of Johnson's every breath make this definitive collection the boxed set to beat.

10 Soul Asylum. Live at the Marquee, New York City, July. One shake of Dave Pirner's blond tresses and a killer cover of "Tracks of My Tears" were all it took to scrape the shine off the new material.

MARK BLACKWELL'S 1990 TOP TEN

A—J No. 1 Top Ten List:

1 Album: Ice Cube's *AmeriKKKa's Most Wanted*.

2 Beef Enhancer: Manvish (Not just a sandwich. More like a meal).

3 Concert: Lou Reed and John Cale's performance of *Songs for Drella* at Brooklyn Academy of Music. (Mos Def joined them for the encore).

4 Drink: SPIN staff writer Dean Kuipers discovers a mysterious Coke can, which has split open (after having been inexplicably left in SPIN's freezer) to reveal a suspicious plastic device wired to its pull tab. The bomb squad is immediately summoned. Their investigation reveals that the device is a new promotional device that surprises its lucky opener with a five-dollar bill.

5 Event and EP: Chickadee's "Mudd Puppies" Athens

continued on page 48

WHEN I FIRST heard people talking about this group of white kids from Boston who can't sing, dance, or play their instruments, I naturally assumed it was the Pixies.

"New Kids on the Block" sounds so, you know, *generic* that you wouldn't figure it for a band name. Which I guess is the point. Now that New Kids have taken over the Pepsi-drinking world, the name's irrelevant anyway. And I'm glad they turned out not to be the Pixies—fact is, they're better than the Pixies. Fact is, New Kids rule.

I mean, when was the last time you saw any of the Pixies' faces on a giveaway cup? How many comic books are written about the Pixies? (New Kids have two.) How many 900 numbers can you call up and get personalized messages from the Pixies? (New Kids have at least two.) When I can call 1 900 PLXINFO and hear ten minutes of bass player Kim Deal talking about how much she likes to have blood dripped on her head (see the video for the Breeders' "Hellbound").

## Whether you like the New Kids' music is immaterial: millions of other people do.

then I'll believe in the Pixies. Maybe

Not to belabor the point, but do the Pixies have a Saturday-morning TV show with Pixie clones trying to cash in on Pixie-mania? New Kids do, unless *Guys Next Door* isn't the obvious Monkees-style rip I take it to be. Plus, if it came down to it, New Kids could probably whip the Pixies' butts at flag football, especially if NKOTB could use Maurice Starr as quarterback.

All of which means two things

1) I don't want to be trampled by hordes of angry pre-pubescent, post-pubescent, or anti-pubescent females for saying something as patently untrue as "New Kids suck", and 2, I feel sorry for the poor fellas. The ephemeral nature of celebrity dictates a probable short shelf life for NKOTB. Which is a shame, because it means we'll have to deal soon with the inevitable splinter group/solo act phenomenon, whereby the aging Kids try to cash in on

## NEW KIDS ON THE BLOCK

and remove the stigma of having been teen idols. I'm not sure the world is ready for Messrs. Knight, Wahlberg & Co. to try to prove they've been around the block.

Nor am I sure that they need to. No doubt piles of money help erase the sting of having been pilloried by the vicious rock dudes who write for SPIN. But everybody wants respect for the fruits of their labor (witness the payback "rap," "Games," on *Step by Step*), and really, the New Kids don't deserve the viperish snapping to which their stuff has been subjected. Mindless teenage pap doesn't come any catchier or well-produced than this, so if what you're objecting to is the existence of mindless teenage pap, you might as well move to Mars, pal. You're obviously too *sensitive* for this planet.

Some people obviously find New Kids more pleasant than listening to some pudgy kid called Black Francis scream about waves of mutilation or whatever. These people don't want to be "confronted" or "challenged" by the music they listen to—they want to be entertained. If this is escapism, well, it's hard really to blame them.

Look, I grew up in the Boston area. I knew tons of kids growing up who looked just like NKOTB. I never liked any of them, either. But that's not the point.

Whether you or I like the New Kids' music is immaterial. Millions of other people do. Do yourself a favor and get on the New Kids on the Block tip. You don't have to actually listen to the music. You just have to promise not to make as many "damp panties" jokes.

JIM GREER



## DIGITAL UNDERGROUND

IN 1990 EVERYONE in the hip hop nation perhaps out of necessity, perhaps not—seemed to be getting blacker-than-thou by spitting out Afro-didactic words of wisdom and sporting medallions of consciousness (Poor Righteous Teachers, X-Clan, Boogie Down Productions). Or brothers were getting off on this bitch-hot-treat-her-like-anything-but-a-lady shit for fun and profit (N.W.A., Ice Cube, the Geto Boys). Or some strange hip hop-as-head music-but-not-psychedelic (i.e., not white) movement was going on (De la Soul, Jungle Brothers, A Tribe Called Quest).

But Digital Underground keep you

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guessing. According to Shock G, "After trying different approaches—we went through a PE, radical kind of thing, and even a peace-and love De la Soul kind of thing—we eventually decided to approach issues from a universal standpoint."

*Sex Packets*, their crazy, mixed-up, over-the-top fun-fest LP debut, was the best of all the West Coast stuff careening down the pike 1990. On "Doo-wutchulike," the so-called Freaks of the Industry imagined "guys and girls dancin' " in some nebulous utopia of festivity. Are the guys and girls dancing with each other? Alone? Same-sex couples? "Who knows? Who cares?" the Underground seem to say. "Why alienate anybody if you can dance? If you can get into the groove and listen to where we're coming from, you're down wit' us."

"We wanted to portray a situation more of anarchy than of partying," says Shock. "The message was that the only important things is to live and let live. Everybody has his or her own space."

As for blackness—that thing that, on vinyl, confuses and terrifies white folks into self-righteous White Negroness and often, unfortunately, propels black folks into wayward and cynical para-Negro-ness—Digital Underground forego the route of Poor

Righteous Brotherhood for righteous boogiehood. Combining black culture's hilarious signifyin' rants (check out the blowfish's monologue on "Underwater Rhymes" or the hit, "Humpty Dance") and the show-time vivacity that has informed jazzmen and Josephine Baker alike.

Digital Underground did something hip hop had neglected to do over the past couple of seasons, a responsibility hip hop had passed on to house

**Digital Underground did something hip hop had passed on to house music over the past couple of seasons: They understood that keeping the groove in motion was one of the blackest things anybody could do .**

music. Whereas all the other groups had ideas in the heart, they didn't have no groove. DU seemed to understand that keeping the groove in motion was one of the blackest things anybody could do in hip hop, year 1990. "Are they old school? Are they new school?" folks ask in "The Way We Swing." Digital Underground is every school, naming songs after dances as

Van McCoy and Chic once did, as well as rapping about the ways of the world like Grandmaster Flash.

"We just try to be in tune to all forms of music," says Shock, "R&B, jazz, rock'n'roll, hip hop. Like Funkadelic, we wanted to use all our influences on one record. Besides, as we say in our upcoming single, 'It's all the same song.'"

It remains to be seen whether Digital Underground will continue to flour-

ish. A group with brains, humor, braggadocio, open-mindedness, and a seemingly heartfelt consciousness of cultural precedents really shouldn't—by hip hop nation law—stick around for too long. The misogynistic, faggot-hating crotch grabbers always surface sooner or later.

Peace

SCOTT POULSON-BRYANT

## M.C. HAMMER

**F**OR OVER A MONTH now I've badgered Capitol Records for a Hammer interview, yet so far I've had no success. "But he's one of our artists of the year," I've repeatedly insisted. Still no dice. Cary Baker, former head of Capitol publicity, finally admitted, "SPIN isn't exactly his favorite magazine these days." Yet just a few short months ago, prior to the release of his second album *Please Hammer Don't Hurt 'Em*, Hammer was quick to sing SPIN's praises. "It's a cool magazine," he said to me, "I read it every week." (By the third week or so, he must be itching for the next issue.)

Why the mood swing? Hammer's apparently upset about that interview's resulting article, which primarily discussed an alleged murder contract that rap group 3rd Bass claimed he'd taken out on them (see "Murder Rap," May '90). Come on, Hammer Don't you remember? When I brought up the 3rd Bass quarrel, you specifically said, "Only if you promise to use this do I want to deal with it." So I did, and now I hear you're pissed anyway. Well, maybe this is my chance to make it up to you. We'll see.

Who was the most environmentally conscious artist of the year? M.C. Hammer. Why? Because he did the

BON JOVI





MICHAEL BÉNAS/RETNA

most recycling.

This is the attitude of many, and it's true that seven of the cuts on Hammer's latest album are reworked, remade, and rejuvenated from previously existing songs. The most recognizable of these is the Rick James "Super Freak" splice in last summer's respectable bad-boy anthem "U Can't Touch This." Yet Hammer also bor-

rows from Marvin Gaye, the Jacksons, Earth, Wind and Fire, the Chi Lites, and twice from Prince. Hammer goes wholesale in the field of sampling by lifting entire riffs and melodies, rather than bits and pieces of instrumentation. But no lawsuits are involved here, since everyone gets credit where credit is due.

Hard-core rappers scoff at Hammer's approach. He's a ripoff, he's just a dancer, he can't rap, and so on. Yet *Please Hammer Don't Hurt 'Em* isn't designed to fit into standard rap molds. Hammer's music is mainstreamed for the masses. The bottom line is that whatever you call the final product—rap or crap, pop or slop—it's put together well. Whether you like it or not, Hammer has become a full-fledged, self-proclaimed "entertainer."

Hammer's personality comes across strongest in *Please Hammer Don't Hurt 'Em: The Movie*, even though this hour-long dramatic video doesn't stack up to the quality of the album. Sentimental, simple, and preachy—somewhat like an after-school special—its main redemption is Hammer's animated and amusing portrayal of a Little Richard-ish preacher called Reverend Pressure (though I actually had the most fun speeding up and slowing down the

tape to make Hammer look silly during the dance numbers). Nevertheless, the major theme that's repeatedly knocked into the viewer's head is an admirable one: the use of intelligence and levelheadedness to fight ignorance and violence. Hammer's ideal is a healthy mind, healthy body, and healthy spirit. While on *AmeriKKKa's Most Wanted*, Ice Cube raps, "Don't gimme that shit about role model," Hammer *begs* to be one. He challenges

**Whatever you call the final product—rap or crap, pop or slop—it's put together well.**

all young people to survive and find a place in the world, just as he did. And he seems sincere.

As Stanley Burrell began the '80s, he was in the process of moving up from bat boy to owner's assistant in the world of Oakland A's baseball. Somewhere along the way he discovered rap, and near the end of the decade began to record, retaining his early nickname after "Hammerin'" Hank Aaron. ("Here comes the Stanley!" and "Stanley time!" just wouldn't have cut the mustard.) Now as Stanley (a.k.a. M.C.

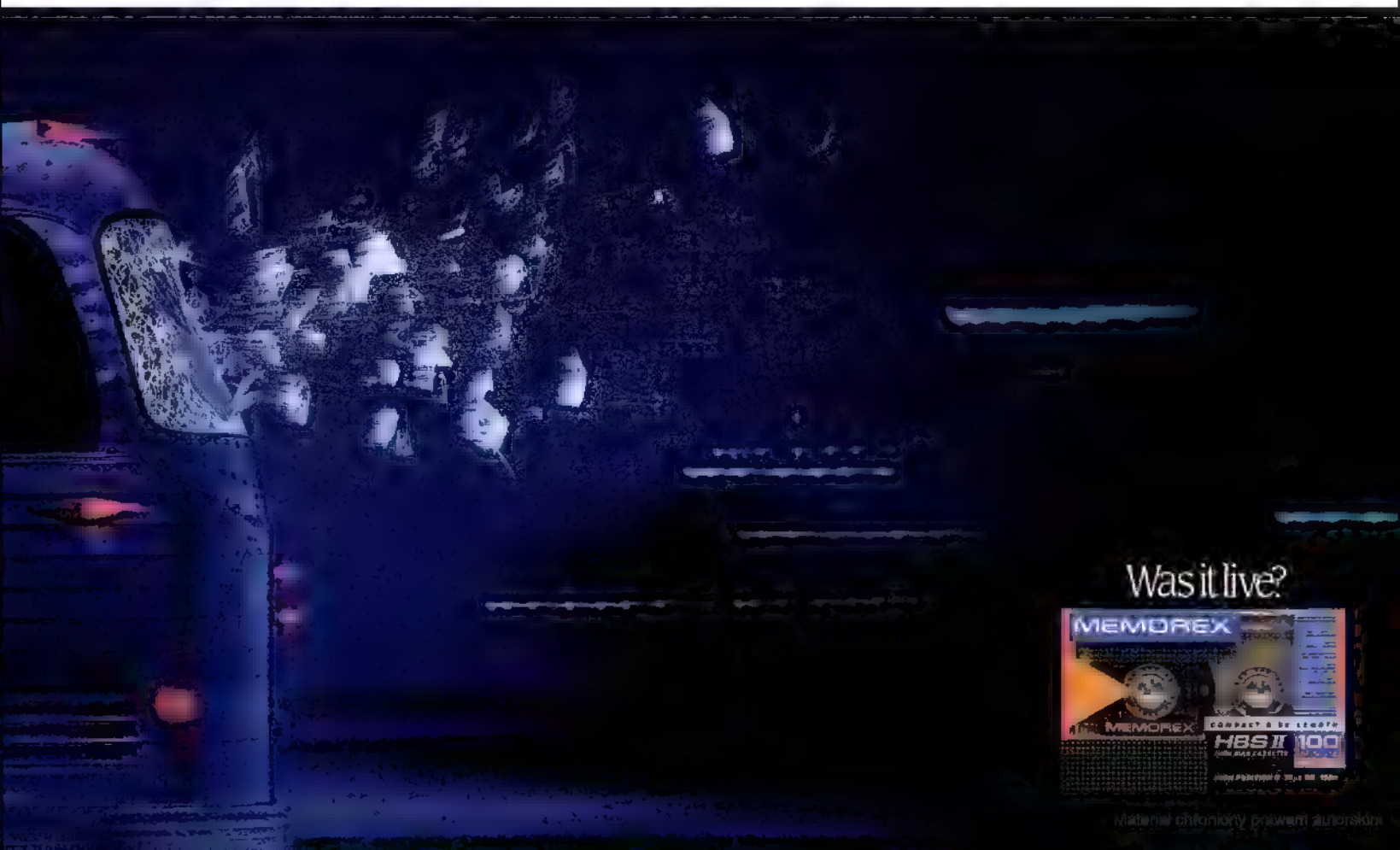
Hammer) has begun the '90s, his *Please Hammer Don't Hurt 'Em* is fast on its way to selling six million copies. At press time the album has held the No. 1 position on the black charts for 19 weeks and on the pop charts for 18 weeks (rivaling 1984's *Purple Rain* soundtrack, which topped the pop charts for 24 weeks). Whether you can touch this or not, you have to respect and admire it.

On the day before this article's deadline, as I was giving up hope of ever reaching Hammer again, I came across this ad: "You Really Can Keep in Touch With the Top Recording Star, M.C. Hammer." So as a last resort, I called the M.C. Hammer Hotline (1-900-740-3334; \$2 per minute). All I got was a recording of a conversation between M.C. Hammer and his former partner, Too Big M.C. (another ex-friend of Hammer's), about baseball player Rickey Henderson. Not enough. So as the voice instructed, I touched No. 6 "to record a personal message for the Hammer to hear himself."

"Hey, Hammer," I said. "Let's let bygones be bygones. I'll help the children. I'll pray. I won't touch any of your stuff. I'll even wear one of those baggy pants-skirt things. Let's be pals. Okay?"

I'm still waiting by the phone.

MARK BLACKWELL



Was it live?



Material chronically present autorakm





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Just in time for the holidays!  
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**AN ALBUM LIKE THIS COMES ALONG ONCE IN A DECADE.**

# CONCERTS OF THE YEAR

Roger Waters. just another prick in the Wall.



## THE WALL, BERLIN

**T**HE DAY AFTER *The Wall* concert in Berlin's infamous Potsdamer Platz, David Bates, Dawn Bridges, and Chris Roberts from PolyGram Records, and I drove to East Berlin.

Checkpoint Charlie was gone and you no longer needed visas to cross from one Berlin to the other, but traffic at the main crossings was congested. So we looked for an alternative route and found, literally, a hole in the wall, and, like Alice stepping through the looking-glass, drove through it into an East German building complex.

It was completely quiet, a perfectly ordinary Sunday afternoon. We parked on the empty street. The building project was drab, of course, but sunlit, and its grassy back lot was lifeless, broken ground that separated the apartments from the road, which ran along the internal edge of the awful, death-chilled wall. We got out of the car and went up to the wall to pick up souvenirs, fragments of granite tyranny lying at the base of this now defeated monster. For 28 years this barrier forbid an entire people to touch it and

now four American vacationers rummaged among its remains for choice paperweights, picking up and tossing aside imperfectly shaped stones and stacking up appealing ones. There were human-sized holes in the wall, like crude doors, and we stepped in and out of them, to find better chunks, crossing back and forth from East to West half a dozen times in five minutes. The largest chunks were on the west side, but the colorful ones were on the east, where liberated East Germans had gleefully graffitied the canvas that jailed them.

A couple of East German teenagers were enterprisingly bashing colored chunks out of the wall to sell to people like us. We could have picked all we wanted off the ground, five feet from where the kids operated, but my friends each bought pieces from them and, satisfied with

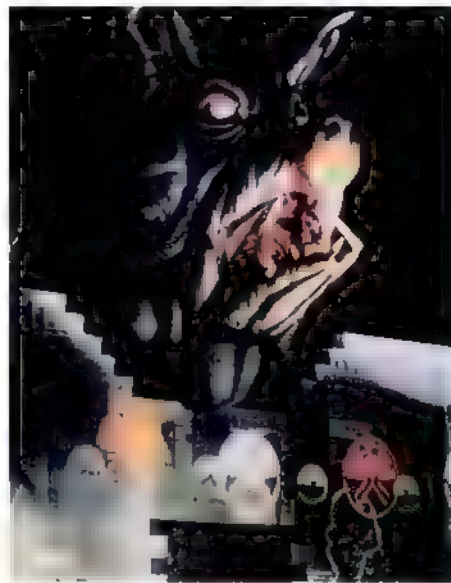
their overall haul, returned to the car. I relented and went back to one kid and bought two pieces from him, too. Just then an East Berlin police car rolled slowly past. I smiled at the impassive-looking cops in the car, cradling rocks in my arms. I figured they'd be happy to see tourists. For as much as tourists dilute the character of a place, at least they are symbols of a benignity that had been missing from around these parts for nearly 30 years.

When I got to the car, David Bates said to me "Did you see the looks on those guys' faces? They looked like they wanted to shoot us and were pissed that they can't anymore."

THE CONCERT ITSELF WASN'T that good, I thought. It seemed at the time, and even more so in retrospect, to be an interruption of the fantastic-sized concept. No one knows how many people came, but the number was somewhere in the region of 300,000 (150,000 tickets were sold, but the organizers brought down the fences so that the approximately as many people without tickets could get in, too)

It was a dramatic occasion, but sort of a stillborn event. The sound wasn't particularly good and in the beginning of the show technical problems forced the performers to stop a couple of times. There were a few powerful moments: Sinéad O'Connor singing "Mother," and Van Morrison, who allegedly had refused to rehearse, singing "Comfortably Numb" (perhaps thinking that was one thing he didn't need to rehearse). Bryan Adams and Paul Carrack were excellent. The Scorpions were great. Cyndi Lauper was, frankly, embarrassing. Jerry Hall drew an ovation, which I believe she mistook as being for her performance. German superstar Ute Lemper was the one most struck by the technical gremlins, having to redo her part hours after the concert was over. Thus, the only German soloist in this rock mass meant to—at least ostensibly—celebrate the greatest German triumph of the 20th century, their rehabilitation, was left to sing to a vast, empty, dark field, her own people long gone.

Roger Waters was anticlimactic and, ultimately, a bore. The concert as an event raised the benchmark for spectacles, like a high jumper setting a new, improbable world record: No single concert has ever been bigger in attendance or venue or scope. And, like a balloon so big that it pops, that's what ruined this: Everything—the night, the hype, the stage, the idea—drowned the performers and the performance. And the very execution of



barbecue-fest and their White Dirt.  
**0** Film: *Ball Jumper*.  
**7** Girl: Saw Winona Ryder as a Debbie Harry concert.  
**0** Hammer: M.C.  
**0** Italian food: Sizzoni's (in Manhattan at 86th and Columbus).  
**10** Journal: *Sassy* magazine (even though I'm a boy).

NATHANIEL WICE'S 1990

TOP TEN SAMPLES:

- 1** M.C. Hammer, "U Can't Touch This," The "Super Freak" riff that was beat down by the disco backlash rode the wave of rap popularity to sell more copies than the original recording.
- 2** Beats International, "Dub Be Good to Me." Samples—like this one from the Clash's "Guns of Brixton"—are not about replaying abstract musical notes, but taking the actual recording. In this case, including the terrible London Calling recording quality.
- 3** Black Box, "Everybody, Everybody." The Aretha Franklin bite is so long that Black Box almost belong on the *Big Chill* soundtrack.
- 4** A Tribe Called Quest, "Kick It." Sample of "Walk on the Wild Side," De La Soul to A Tribe Called Quest as Steely Dan is to Lou Reed. Whatever that means.
- 5** Guns N' Roses, "Civil War." Cool populist inversion of racism and white trash; cool use of *Cool Hand Luke*.

- 6** Snap, "The Power." With or without Chill Rob G, the logical extension of our Mannerist age—and Mannerist ages are supposed to be about logical extensions—is sampling the samplers. Dub it! Metasampling.
- 7** Digital Underground's *Sex Packets* stood on the shoulders of giants: Parliament Funkadelic.
- 8** World Party. The white-boy version of sampling is to come as close as possible to the sound of *Exile on Main Street*.
- 9** James Brown sample of the year. Robert Plant on *Manic Nirvana*.
- 10** On "Dish and Tell," House of Venus sample a Loleatta Holloway monologue from an '87 bootleg, recorded live at the Paradise Garage.

MARY ANN MARSHALL'S 1990 TOP TEN:

- 1** 1-800-BAD-WEED. The Missouri community hotline to inform officials of suspicious drug activity.



7 If we don't succeed, then we run the risk of failure.

Dan Quayle

8 Fox TV's *In Living Color*

9 Queen Latifah

10 The resurgence of beat bottoms.

11 Public Enemy, "Fight the Power"

12 "If rap music had been around when I was a young man, I would have become a musician instead of a politician."—Richard Nixon

13 The Nation's 125th anniversary

14 The release of Nelson Mandela

15 John Lurie. (Call me.)

## CONCERTS OF THE YEAR

STACI BONNER'S 1990 TOP TEN

1 Laura Dern and Nicolas Cage, *Couple of the year*

2 Amok Press. Amok's catalog includes books on serial killers and surrealism, and making LSD and bombs, not to mention everything Nabokov ever wrote.

3 Best live performance: Nivek Ogre of Skinny Puppy, who can do no wrong.

4 The re-radicalized, ad-free Ms. magazine.

5 Any Psycho TV concert anywhere. Overwhelming happiness. Dionysus is alive and well in 1990.

6 Dr. Etienne-Emile Baulieu. Creator and strong supporter of RU-486.

7 "A mind is a terrible thing."—Dan Quayle

8 Ministry's *A Mind Is a Terrible Thing to Taste*

9 The First Annual Wax Trax Extravaganza at the Ritz, New York, NY.

10 Louise Brooks protégée Sherilyn Fenn.

LEGS McNEIL'S 1990 TOP TEN

1 Any Jim Thompson book or movie.

2 Cellular telephones.

3 The United Nations.

4 Maps.

5 Rhino Records.

6 Masters of Reality with Daniel Ray and Ginger Baker.

7 Any music video with exploding fish.

8 Blitzpop.

9 Hollywood by Charles Bukowski.

10 *Wendland Avenue* by Danny Sugerman.

SUSAN DeCAPITE'S 1990 TOP TEN

1 The sexy voices that call SPIN: Bob Guccione, Jr., Jon Bon Jovi, and Diamond Mike.

2 They freed Mandela.

3 I went to England on vacation and walked a penguin dog in all the gorgeous parks and had tea with my best friend, Kath.

Continued on page 52

the show, where a stage crew built the great wall out of Styrofoam bricks so that by the end of the first hour (and, effectively, long before that), the musicians were completely removed from view, worked against involvement in it. We—all 300,000 of us—watched 90 percent of the action on TV, giant video screens built into the wall.

In front of his stark white wall, Roger Waters performed alone for the most part, or with extras as props, in this overblown enactment of his lifelong insecurity problems. He attempted to appropriate the real wall and real history for his show and choked on his own hubris. The music was, and is (on the newly released live record), exceptional rock'n'roll. But this show lacked the fire of Pink Floyd's original performances, and Waters lacks the charisma to carry off the audacity of his own idea.

In the weeks preceding the show, the Russian Army de-mined Potsdamer Platz, the famous no man's-land between East and West Berlin, and picked up rocks and stones from a terrain that had been for 28 years as barren and lifeless as the moon, and crossed by about as many people.

Stage workers got the opportunity to tour Hitler's bunker. Thousands stood on it the night of the concert, while Roger Waters stood in roughly the same spot as Hitler had stood half a century earlier, addressing similar-sized crowds.

The cause the concert benefited—the Memorial Fund for Disaster Relief, founded by British World War II hero Leonard Cheshire—is of course a worthy one. Cheshire wants to raise 500 million pounds—a fiver for every life lost in wars this century—for disaster relief. The concert, including all revenues, contributed two million dollars to the fund. The double album is a superb piece of music, worth the price for Sinéad O'Connor and Van Morrison alone. It's infinitely better than the show's sound was: The producers used some of the previous night's rehearsal performances to replace the problem spots in the actual event. Buy the record. If you missed the concert, you didn't miss as much as everyone involved said you did.

BOB GUCCIONE, JR.

## STURGIS, SOUTH DAKOTA



Sturgis. hog appeal.

IN THE BLACK HILLS of South Dakota (the place where Visa bills come from) sits the little town of Sturgis. For the past 50 years, the local motorcycle club has sponsored a rally, and among those who define themselves by what's between their legs, it's clearly the place to be. But even the locals were taken aback this year when over 250,000 bikers came roaring into town.

The first thing you notice about the rally (besides how clean it is) is the constant hum of engines. The roar comes and goes, like waves. It is so pervasive that you almost don't hear it after a while. The main street (oddly enough called Main Street) looks like

an open call for a remake of *The Wild One*. There are bikers in restaurants, bikers in motels, bikers everywhere you turn.

And they are very patriotic. Real big are T-shirts emblazoned with the American flag and "Burn This One, Asshole." Bikers are not subtle in their view of domestic politics.

The Angels were there. One doesn't just waltz up to a Hell's Angel and go, "Hi, wanna rap, dude?" You don't look at them too intensely; you don't take their pictures; you try to refrain from humming Stones songs around them.

### Three Days of Fun and Music

THE MAIN CAMPGROUND at Sturgis is



Buffalo Chip campground at Sturgis.

Buffalo Chip and that's where Tanya Tucker, Joan Jett, Marshall Tucker, Luther Vandross (joke), and BTO jammed. Then came Steppenwolf. Dude. Lead singer John Kay is in better shape than half of us, and he's gotta be kissing up to 50. No, he never understood Hermann Hesse, and he is legally blind, so he doesn't and cannot ride a bike. "I can ride a Schwinn," he laughs. That's the reason he wore those bitchin' dark shades all the time. Life is filled with irony. He didn't even write "Born to Be Wild." Kay is grateful for the support that the biker community has lavished upon him over the years (he's treated like a returning prophet), but he is an uneasy convert. The connection between bikers and Steppenwolf came about because of Kay's propensity to wear leather, the song on the *Easy Rider* soundtrack, and "the media packaging us as a biker band," he rattles off. It's an explanation that he has offered before.

After the feedback of "Magic Carpet Ride," the familiar chords start up and the audience goes nuts. Engines are revved (the biker equivalent to the wave), babes (on their old men's shoulders) rip their shirts off, beer cans are hoisted, and "Born to Be Wild" pounds out of the speakers. It's the voice of your youth. The "Show Us Your Tits" signs are waving; everyone knows the words. It is the apex of cool.

Neil Diamond was spotted. So were Larry Mullen, Billy Idol, Peter Dinklage, and Jay Leno. No Elvis spotlights cited, although several claimed to have seen Malcolm Forbes.

When you tire of talking about your tail pipe with the guys, there's the zucchini and beer-bottle contests, wherein female participants lift said objects without their hands. Tasteful.



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continued from page 56

- 4 I'm dancing to Deee-Lite.
- 5 I made new friends (Mr. and Mrs. Millionaire and their friends) at a rave at the Hamptons dump, where we found a record player and living-room furniture.
- 6 I met Howard Devoto at the Samuel Beckett Pub (where serious thinking meets serious drinking).
- 7 My best friend, Gary, married the perfect girl, and I didn't scream, "It should've been me!"
- 8 I grew tomatoes, aubergines, and a large herb garden in garbage bags set in milk crates on my roof in Brooklyn.
- 9 I got a red carnation, thrown to me by Al Green at the Ritz in New York.
- 10 I'm wearing my new cat suit everywhere.

MARK WOODRUFF'S 1990 TOP TEN

- 1 Deee-Lite. Best new band from the neighborhood.
- 2 The B-52's. Best old band from the neighborhood.
- 3 Anything my friend Jeremy Lock brings back from England, like: Prefab Sprout, Jordan: The Comeback (Epic), Moody Blues for the '90s? No, better than that, but I haven't put my finger on it yet; or—
- 4 The It. On Top of the World (Black Market/Big Life). Their house is a very, very, very fine house.
- 5 Rebe McEntire, Clint Black, and George Jones. (I'm from the South.)
- 6 The Collected Works of Jane Bowles. A great (and truly bizarre) writer overshadowed by her husband's success. Did you know that she suffered a stroke and died years later as the result of a spell put on her by a Moroccan gypsy? One day in Tangier, with a wild look in her eye, she ran up and down so many flights of stairs (dragging her bum leg behind her and stopping just long enough to drink lots and lots of Brandy) that she eventually just bit the dust—literally, and as it turned out, permanently. (At least that's what my friend James says.)
- 7 Actor: Gary Oldman.
- 8 Actress: Suzanne Pleshette as Leona Helmsley. Costing such.
- 9 Magazine: Monk, for having the wherewithal to publish a travel magazine from the dinette of a mobile home; Interview, for changing staff almost as often as SPIN did.
- 10 Chaka Khan (and the tape: Darinka made for me). Now and forever.

## CONCERTS OF THE YEAR

"WE'RE TRYING TO SOFTEN up our groove a little bit, so we won't alienate the young girls, like we were doing on the Kiss tour," says Apache, smirking his ass off as we cruise down the main drag en route to Sturgis. He and Fidel Panigua are in the L.A. band Little Caesar. Photos make these guys look certifiably scary. In person, they are way cool, very funny, and not scary; they are suffering from an image problem in the third degree. "We're just guys who have to say stuff like, 'The record company made us shave, damn it!'" Apache grins. He looks like the bastard son of Lee Van Cleef and Willy DeVille and is this gal's ideal dream

date (tattoos, cool shoes, knows b-ball). Little Caesar are trying to break out of the biker band/tattooed love boys ghetto. They cover soul songs reverently. Lead singer Ron Young has a set of pipes that most white boys can only dream of owning. "The brothers like us," Apache boasts. "Get this: John Salley [of the Pistons] said on TV in Detroit that we were his favorite band, and played the video for 'Chain of Fools' on the show," he beams.

Fidel continues, "Little Caesar plays music for Americans and we're named after a pizza chain and if you don't like pizza, you're not American!"

AMY LINDEN



Knebworth: field of dreams.

## KNEBWORTH, ENGLAND

**K**NEBWORTH '90 WAS AN EVENT that could perhaps best be described as a Dinosaurs of Rock wet dream. For the 120,000 people who packed into an English field under ominously dark skies, it was the ultimate '70s rock'n'roll lineup: Status Quo; Cliff Richard and the Shadows; Phil Collins and Genesis (sans Peter Gabriel); Robert Plant and Jimmy Page; a supergroup made up of Elton John, Eric Clapton, and Mark Knopfler; Paul McCartney; and Pink Floyd. Tears for Fears (the only under 40 band there) kicked it off in a steady downpour and it seemed fear of electrocution should have been weighing heavily on their minds. When it came to creativity, the audience exhibited more spunk than the performers; case in point, a guy who worked his way up to the stage by biting people on the arm.

There was a good reason for the mayhem. The show raised six million dollars for two worthy causes. One

was the record-industry-financed English School for the Performing Arts. The second and most highly publicized was the Nordoff-Robbins Music Therapy Foundation, which helps handicapped children communicate through music.

Clive Robbins started the foundation in 1959 with the late Paul Nordoff, an American composer. The proceeds from the show have been used to build a new facility to accommodate more children. The clinic in England functions for 60 kids who come in weekly to work with stringed instruments, drums, pianos, anything musical. For most of the children this therapy is the only form of communication they are capable of.

For more information on the foundation write to: Nordoff-Robbins Music Therapy Center, Department of Music and Music Professions, New York University, 33 W. 4th St., New York, NY 10003.

LAUREN SPENCER



### 1990 TOP-GROSSING CONCERT TOURS

1. Billy Joel, \$22.8 million
2. Aerosmith, \$21.2 million
3. New Kids on the Block, \$19.7 million\*
4. Paul McCartney, \$18.9 million
5. Janet Jackson, \$17.9 million

\*At press time, New Kids continue to tour, making upwards of \$1 million per stadium date.



A creature was stirring,  
but it wasn't the mouse.



With a twist.

Ice-cold.

Maybe with

a favorite

elf or two.



# ALBUMS OF THE YEAR

## SPIN'S PICKS FOR 1990

### ICE CUBE

*AmeriKKKa's Most Wanted*

(Priority)

Whether or not you agree with some of the more brutal sentiments expressed on *Most Wanted*, the music speaks for itself. At least Ice Cube's secure enough in his rap machismo to let both Yo-Yo and Flavor Flav dis him on his own record.

### SONIC YOUTH

*Goo* (DGC)

What at first blush might have seemed an uneven major label debut turns out to have a lot more substance upon repeated listening. For a lot of people, this will be their introduction to the glories of SY, and so far, so good. "Kool Thing" is also one of the best videos of the year.

### JANE'S ADDICTION

*Ritual de lo Habitual*

(Warner Bros.)

The surprising success of Jane's Addiction's second Warner Bros. effort points to the growing popularity of the funk/metal genre. A healthy dose of arty pretension lifts *Ritual* above the crowd and, at press time, into the Top 20. Perry Farrell may indeed sound like an insect, but then again, so does Axl Rose.

### ALICE IN CHAINS

*Facelift* (Columbia)

Gloom metal from Seattle, redeemed both by the quality of the songwriting and the intensity of the playing. Not exactly a typical product of the Seattle scene, but then again not far enough off to seriously confuse anyone. We expect big things from these guys.

### DEEE-LITE

*World Clique* (Elektra)

House record of the year. Band of the future.

### NEIL YOUNG

*Ragged Glory* (Reprise)

Not bad for an old man.

### TEENAGE FAN CLUB

*A Catholic Education* (Matador)

Scotland's finest sound a lot like an American indie guitar band. Maybe now the British music press will forget about Dinosaur, Jr.

### PUBLIC ENEMY

*Fear of a Black Planet*

(Columbia)

Not as good as *It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back*. Good enough for you.

### SINÉAD O'CONNOR

*I Do Not Want What I Haven't Got*

(Ensign/Chrysalis)

If you play "Nothing Compares 2U" backward you can hear the words to the "Star-Spangled Banner."

### LL COOL J

*Mama Said Knock You Out*

(Def Jam)

Breaks no new ground. Doesn't have to.

### PRIMUS

*Frizzle Fry* (Caroline)

From the developing San Francisco funk/metal scene, with love.



CHRISTOPHER GALLO

### BOB MOULD

*Black Sheets of Rain*

(Virgin)

Some say this is the record everyone was afraid Hüsker Dü would make when they went to a major label. Which is a compliment.

### THE BREEDERS

*Pod* (4AD)

Better than the Pixies.

### WAS (NOT WAS)

*Are You Okay?* (Chrysalis)

You're okay, they're okay.

### CONCRETE BLONDE

*Bloodletting* (I.R.S.)

Moods for moderns.

### PRINCE

*Graffiti Bridge*

(Paisley Park)

Not his best, but better than most people's best.

### MASTERS OF REALITY

*Masters of Reality*

(Delicious Vinyl)

This 1987 reissue promises great things for the future, especially now that Ginger Baker's come on board.

### ERIC B. & RAKIM

*Let the Rhythm Hit 'Em* (MCA)

A real, real good rap record from a pair you hoped for more from.

### LOU REED/JOHN CALE

*Songs for Drella* (Warner Bros.)

A moving testament to one of the '60s most important icons.

### SOUL II SOUL

*Vol. II: 1990—A New Decade*

(Virgin)

Probably underrated (even on this chart), this wasn't as disappointing a follow-up as both pundits and the pop charts would lead you to believe.

COMPILED BY JIM GREER

### 1990 BEST-SELLING ALBUMS (by volume)\*

1. M.C. Hammer, *Please Hammer Don't Hurt 'Em* (Capitol), 6 million
2. Janet Jackson, *Rhythm Nation 1814* (A&M), 5 million
3. Phil Collins (NE), *But Seriously* (Atlantic), 3.5 million
4. Sinéad O'Connor, *I Do Not Want What I Haven't Got*, (Chrysalis) 3 million
5. Paula Abdul, *Forever Your Girl* (Virgin), 2.2 million

\*At press time.

GIFT  
IDEA

# THEY CAN'T BURN IT IF YOU OWN IT.

## FOUR TO ZERO IN 14 SECONDS

By the time you have finished reading this sentence another eight acres of the world's rain forests will have been destroyed. Four acres every 1.4 seconds. Over 200,000 acres per day. Slashed, burned, and left for dead by unscrupulous lumber, mineral and land "developers". In Brazil and Costa Rica alone, it is estimated that in the next quarter century 1.2 million animal and plant species are at risk of being forever wiped from the face of our planet.

## PAPER SHUFFLERS

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This land will be yours, free and clear. Each and every one acre parcel owned by you will immediately become the protected home of countless species of tropical birds, mammals, and other wildlife. A copy of your deed, in your name, will be filed with that country's Government, preventing further destruction of this valuable resource. The original deed will be sent to you for safekeeping. The price of each acre of rain forest is \$100.00, or \$58.00 a half acre, and is limited to six acres per registrant.

## A THOUSAND YEAR GIFT

Your deed will contain a covenant which forbids anyone to develop, burn, log, or otherwise encroach upon your land for a period of one thousand years. No one may even travel this land without your express written permission. You may of course present your deed as a gift to someone else, or even have us register it initially in their name. In either case, your rain forest acreage is an heirloom that may be handed from one generation to another, leaving the legacy of the future to our children.

## EACH ACRE

For each acre you purchase, you will first receive from us a signed Certificate of Acknowledgement, and a map pinpointing the location of your land in the rain forest (please visit it!).

## IN ADDITION

In addition you will receive The Rain Forest Foundation T-Shirt, also acknowledging your pride in our planet. The actual deed to your land will be sent to you upon its arrival from INCRA, the government land institute in Brasilia, or the Registro De Propiedades in Costa Rica. We hope you enjoy owning your land, and thank you for giving to save our planet!

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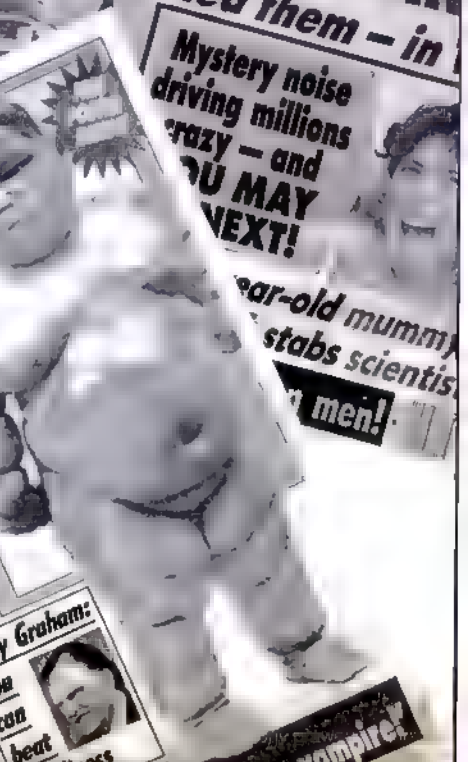
SPIN'S NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

SECRETLY FAXED TO EARTH BY PREGNANT BISEXUAL

MARTIAN INFANT — OFFSPRING OF ELVIS!

# THE WEEKLY WORLD NEWS

is more than just a supermarket tabloid.



**G**OD BLESS AMERICA, if for no other reason than that it came up with the *Weekly World News*. The supermarket tabloid is more than a weekly paper—it's a cult, a way of life, an attitude. It's a media mutant—deeply, wholly American, demented and brilliant. Tacky as a Twinkie. Bad for you. Hilarious. Rock'n'roll.

Honest. As one reader said, "It's the only paper that keeps me informed of the human condition."

It's not really a newspaper at all. It's something else. Something better. Newspapers are generally dry, unimaginative, and righteous; so terribly caught up in what they call "the facts." The *Weekly World News* is more concerned with the essentials: laughter; storytelling; mythmaking; breaking the monotony. If it weren't for the *Weekly World News*, for instance, Elvis would still be dead. Can you imagine?

When *USA Today* came to interview the hefty woman, they found her sprawled out on an Elvis rug. "She had even built an Elvis shrine" Clontz chuckles.

The phenomenon swept the nation. Elvis sightings became more common than UFO sightings. Elvis statues wept real tears. Elvis cured the sick. He wrote letters to fans. He traveled the country and even gave an impromptu performance of "Blue Suede Shoes" at a Virginia college. Books came out. Television shows. Elvis Is Alive T-shirts. A Dear Elvis advice column in a national magazine.

"It became a joke," says Eddie Clontz. "Everybody loved it. Right down to Houston Oilers coach Jerry Gramble, who used to leave a ticket for Elvis at the gate of every show."

Eddie laughs. "We had a lot of fun with that one," he says, "and America had a lot of fun. And we sold

pronounced black humor, general irreverence, and above all, bizarre and brilliant headlines, has made it stand out as an independent and superior concept in the tedious mess of tabloids.

The *Weekly World News* may be the only magazine with its own fan club, whose members rally each year at conventions and swap their favorite headlines. Readers range from housewives to college kids to rock stars. Cyndi Lauper never misses an issue. Madonna reads it. David Byrne made a movie, *True Stories*, based on *Weekly World News* articles. "We even get letters from the White House," says Eddie Clontz. "We get letters from NASA. They love our UFO stories. We wind up on their bulletin boards a lot."

You can't miss it. There you are, bored stiff in the check-out line at the supermarket, when suddenly these headlines start jumping out at you:

## It's a way of life. BY CELIA FARBER

It was the summer of 1988, and a woman had just self-published a book about Elvis's staged death and subsequent aliveness. The book went nowhere quietly, until a mention of it in a British tabloid caught *Weekly World News* editor Eddie Clontz's eye. "We were hurting for a headline that week,"

recalls Clontz, "and so I said, What the hell, we'll just bring Elvis back." Clontz chuckles and leans back in his chair in the *Weekly World News* office, which is cloistered together with sister publication the *National Enquirer* amid the palm trees in tiny, tranquil Lantana, Florida.

Clontz, a former editor of the *St. Petersburg Times*, is clearly the heart and soul of the *Weekly World News*. His desk is not tucked away behind some important-looking door, but smack in the middle of the newsroom, where his editorial staff can hear him. "I got the guy who eats the bugs on the phone," somebody calls out from across the room. "Yeah, but what kind of bugs?" Eddie Clontz shouts back. "Find out what kind of bugs he eats, okay?"

Clontz looks perfectly normal, with glasses, rosy cheeks, and a devilish twinkle in his eye when he smiles or laughs, which he does a lot.

He takes a call and then turns back to me. "Where were we? Oh yes, Elvis."

"We never thought that would go over that well," he says, "but it just went boom and we came back with three follow-up stories."

First there was the woman who'd seen Elvis in a checkout line in Kalamazoo, Michigan, wearing a motorcycle helmet. Then a woman called up and said she had lived with Elvis since 1981 and they had just broken up. *Weekly World News* did the obvious thing.

"We gave her a lie-detector test," says Eddie Clontz. "And she passed. She really believed she had lived with Elvis. So we put her on the cover strapped to a lie detector, with the headline 'I've Lived With Elvis Since 1981,' Says Waitress."

a lot of papers."

That's the *Weekly World News* concept in a nutshell. Lighten up. Give people a laugh. Nothing is sacred. Not even Elvis. Not life after death, not heaven or hell. (*Weekly World News* has run exclusive photos of heaven.) Not even Mikhail Gorbachev, who, on the day I visit, is being embellished with antennae. The photograph of Gorbachev is dropped onto Eddie Clontz's desk. He picks it up and studies it for a second, then shouts across the room to one of the writers, "That's good. We can say he's a space alien sent here 25 years ago to bring peace to the world and this was the way he looked." Eddie chuckles and turns to me. "We have a lot of fun here."

Go ahead and laugh, but some of the sharpest minds in the country work here. They're particularly famous for their ingenious headlines, always very witty. Like "Man Marries Cow—Beefy Bride Says, 'I Moo,'" or "Gal With a Crush!—Tubby Gal Sits on Man Till He Says, 'I Do,' Says Suit." Of the 12-person editorial staff, many are defectors from the mainstream media—former *New York Times* editors, White House correspondents, Harvard-educated English professors. When asked why he came to the *Weekly World News*, Joe Berger, a former White House correspondent, says, "This is more fun. The people are more interesting, and the pay is better."

THE *WEEKLY WORLD NEWS*, which started with a circulation of 250,000 and now boasts a fat one-million-plus, was launched ten years ago by the late tabloid king Generoso Pope, who also launched the *National Enquirer*. The *Weekly World News* looks like the *Enquirer* used to, when it was black and white, but that's just about the only thing that the two have in common. First of all, the *Weekly World News* hates celebrities and resorts to them only when they can insult them. "We're very, very irreverent," says Eddie Clontz. "We try to knock celebrities down a peg when we can. I think that's the allure of celebrity stories. The woman living in the house trailer in the West Virginia mountains whose husband took off two years ago and left her with six kids—she wants to read about these people having problems too." Thus, coupled with the magazine's

"Hitler Was a Woman—WW2's Best Kept Secret!"

"Gurl Gives Birth to Her Own Brother!"

"Bowler Shoots Hubby for Throwing Gutter Ball!"

"Interview With Satan!"

"Pop! Woman's Bra Bursts—11 Injured!"

"29-Year-Old Beauty Marries Giraffe!"

"Wife Nagged Hubby 20 Years and Never Knew He Was Deaf!"

"Fidel Castro in Love With Roseanne Barr!"

"Human Vacuum Cleaner Chokes to Death on a Dish Towel!"

The thing demands to be bought. You take it home and read every word. It's fascinating. Bizarre. But what is it? Where does it come from? It's too good to be the product of somebody's imagination. They can't possibly just sit around and make this stuff up randomly. Or can they?

"We don't make anything up," says Eddie Clontz with a straight face. "We have sources on everything."

Huh?

Eddie explains the process. "Unlike a daily newspaper," he says, "if somebody calls the *Weekly World News* and says, 'Look, I'm being watched and I know the phone's tapped, but I've got to tell you—I'm an escapee from a flying saucer from the planet whatever and my captain is here and he's eating a banana sandwich in my kitchen, would you like to speak with him about an upcoming alien invasion?' we don't say, 'Well, we're going to have to speak with your psychiatrist first.'"

"We'll say, 'That's great. We may even pay you something for your story if we can take your photograph.' And he'll say, 'Well, I can't be seen in a photograph because I don't show up on film.' Then we'll say, 'That's okay, we understand,' and we'll do an interview."

"It's entertainment. We want to give people a good time. We're very careful not to hurt our readers. We're very careful with the medical stories, for instance. But a lot of our stories are just straight news stories. We subscribe to 1,200 papers, magazines, and medical journals from around the world, and we sift through them all to find material."

continued on page 100

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# EXTREMIS

After a three-year

recording hiatus,

INXS are back with *X*.

STEVEN DALY

corners the

Australian band in a

London hotel.

All the great themes have been turned into theme parks—we're in the used-up decade with nothing to look forward to and no one to look up to.

—Christian Slater as Hard Harry in *Pump Up the Volume*.

**S**O TRUE, SO TRUE. But even if these played-out, post everything '90s have rendered subcultures impotent and rock irrelevant, we still need in-car entertainment. And in that area, INXS are the market leaders.

Three years after their massively successful *Kick* set, the Australian combo reenter the arena with *X*, a savvy summation of developments since 1984's Duran Duran-ish breakthrough hit, "Original Sin." The new record strips away the inconsistencies that have made the band's past albums gummy going. Hungry after their hiatus, the seven-piece band infuses their performances with a raw garage-band edge—with rock's finest rhythm section at the top of its game. Both halves of INXS's creative nucleus have been billeted in a hotel on London's Hyde Park for the past fortnight, explaining their latest statement to journalists from all

over the globe. Your humble correspondent is literally the last in line.

AS MICHAEL HUTCHENCE lounges languidly on the sofa in beat-up jeans and a shapeless T-shirt, two words springs forcibly to mind about the man widely considered the foxiest singer in Christendom—"hair conditioner." However disheveled and tired, though, Hutchence remains amenable and relaxed, ever-willing to field any topic you throw at him.

Hutchence's co-composer Andrew Farriss is, by contrast, immaculately groomed: tightly clad in chic black, holding his stocky frame erect in an armchair. He has just, I am warned, brought his previous interrogators to near narcosis with an earnest ecological sermon. The man does not, apparently, bring much to the party.

As we break the ice, Hutchence coyly hints at trepidation over what is, effectively, his band's comeback. But at this stage of the game it would probably take an album of Tibetan thugbone trumpet music to shake INXS's sales base, which pretty well describes the disc Hutchence cut dur-





ing his solo sojourn last year: "Max Q," a collaboration with maverick Melbourne musician Ollie Olsen, did not sell that well despite attracting epithets of the "difficult but rewarding" sort from reviewers.

"The bad thing is we're now 30," says Hutchence. "We took a holiday and came back old farts! It was very necessary because we'd never had any time off in all these years of playing. You have to go out and have a life and draw inspiration from it. In a way we were getting to the point of losing touch with what was going on; losing touch with our more soulful emotions and the most basic parts of life."

"You can be in a band and start thinking, 'Yeah, I'm the lead singer. But so what?' You can become very casual when you get this massive appreciation, and then you suddenly wonder if you can do it in another context."

Since he found that other context, Hutchence's voice has matured into a fine instrument, and its assured resonance has to be one of X's most notable features. The result of voice training, perhaps?

"It's all that nightclubbing," Hutchence jests. "I

really learned a lot over the last few years. I became very hungry to learn about singing. I'd never really considered myself much of a singer before I was just a member of this band, not making any big vocal statement. Only recently it's occurred to me that maybe there's more to it—that I should attempt something I learned a lot about rhythm and phrasing by listening to things like rap."

The tongue-in-cheek nightclub reference is Hutchence's nod to the reputation he enjoys, even within INXS, as something of a hedonist. Sure enough, when cumulative wear and tear on stick man Jon Farriss halted INXS's 1988 world tour, the group's frontman threw himself headfirst into an exploration of house music and its attendant culture.

"I was touring so much I'd never really had a chance to immerse myself in it," Hutchence says. "It's a festival thing, almost—from the '60s—and I just thought it was great. I had a boom box with acid house going the whole time. I'm sure everybody hated my guts."

"It's kind of a mindless thing, I think, a fatigue level where people got tired of having to know

which band was this and whose face was that. They just wanted to enjoy themselves again with music, and it's created this incredible new area. Which brings us back to bands playing dance music with smiles on their faces; a bit of color. Which is what we've been doing the whole time anyway."

"I just want to say," Andrew Farriss interjects, apparently without animus, "that in my private time away from the band I don't go to nightclubs and I don't get fucked up. I don't want to be a fucked-up person—I want to be a conscious, aware person."

"So I'm a fucked-up person," Hutchence coyly concludes. "That's me speaking, personally. I'm not putting a role onto anyone else by saying this."

"I don't call it fucked up," says the singer. "I just enjoy myself. What can I say? I just like listening to really loud music in little rooms with lights going 'round! I'm definitely a social creature, but I don't only meet people in clubs. I think that's a stupid place to get to know people because they're not themselves. They take on a role as soon as they walk through that door. But that's interesting in itself, I get a lot of stuff for lyrics from it."

These forays also added to Hutchence's musical vocabulary, as he explains: "I've never been as voraciously interested as I am now in all kinds of music. I used to be quite casual about it, but now I'm attempting to become musically literate. It's not just acid house, but all kinds of stuff."

"My opinion of any new style of music is that I don't get too immersed in anything," says Farriss. "I think it's interesting and so on, but in ten years who knows what'll be happening," he concludes, distractedly picking up a glossy magazine from the coffee table.

**M**ICHAEL HUTCHENCE'S ENTHUSIASM for the burgeoning Ecstasy culture couldn't be further from today's cleaned-up consensus, from the legions of peritent pop stars who've come down from the mountain clutching a different kind of tablet. The singer feels that, regardless of this, the prevailing public attitude towards drug use is a healthy one.

"Now people are actually choosing and discovering for themselves what they want," he says. "Not just mindlessly copying rock stars. But I definitely think you should still listen to people like Aerosmith, who've been through nightmares; that doesn't mean don't do it—but listen to them."

Did INXS ever have their own nightmare stage?

"I think we just got in under the fence," says Hutchence. "I've been close enough, been involved in this and that, but so have most people—I know accountants that have. There's a lot of mythology about people who are so-called bastions of civilized society: doctors, lawyers—some of these people are much more out of it than people in bands."

"I don't like drugs," asserts chunky sidekick Farriss. "I like being healthy. I think that when you've got a healthy body you've got a healthy mind, and that makes people happier."

"We didn't really go through a psychedelic stage or a smack stage or a coke stage," continues Hutchence. "Nothing that's really affected us. Maybe

## INXS has fashioned an effortlessly funky rock swagger that shows punishing plodders like the Red Hot Chili Peppers and Faith No More a clean pair of heels.



INXS's Jon Farriss, left,

and Michael Hutchence.

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• LET THERE BE HARMONY •



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MARTIN FIND TRUE LOVE WITH LUSCIOUS AUNT JULIA?

**WILL**

THE SCRIPTWRITER SCREW UP THEIR LIVES AND EVERYONE ELSE'S?

**DOES**

A FROG HAVE A WATERPROOF ASS?

**Barbara Hershey Keanu Reeves and Peter Falk**



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—Jeff Craig, SIXTY SECOND PREVIEW

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—Jeff Menell, THE HOLLYWOOD REPORTER

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# PAIN IT BLACK

**A band that hates dance music is about to release an album of dance**

**(S)**OMEWHERE OUTSIDE OF LONDON 1:30 A.M. About a half dozen kids, mostly girls, are waiting in front of a seven-foot-high metal gate to catch a glimpse of—or even better, a word with—their favorite band. Meanwhile, the objects of their affection sit upstairs discussing murder. Robert Smith—singer, guitarist, and conceptualist for the Cure—is shaking his head in disbelief as bassist Simon Gallup tries to convince him that one of their acquaintances actually did her boyfriend in with a shovel.

"Wait a minute—you expect me to believe she hit him over the head, dragged him out, and buried him in a shallow grave? Who told you that?" Smith asks, while kicking back on the couch in a T-shirt and boxer shorts.

Perry Bamonte, the Cure's new keyboardist, is called out from the dressing room to confirm the story. "It's true," he says, "she told us while we were in the pub."

Somehow this explanation doesn't carry a lot of impact coming out of the mouth of a guy who bears more than a slight resemblance to Eddie Munster, complete with wolfman makeup and velvet suit. Robert—who only moments before had black eyeliner and lip-stick smeared on his pale face, his trademark black hair teased to perfection—doesn't look convinced, but the debate is a good way to pass the time before he is forced to mutate into a Siamese twin. Not to worry, the Cure haven't joined the circus. They're just shooting a video (almost the same thing), and despite all the rumors they haven't broken up.

In fact, there is quite a lot of Cure material waiting to be born: A live album from last year's Prayer tour is in the can; a Robert Smith solo album, which has been an ongoing project for a while, is close to completion; and Rough Trade has just put out *Blue Sunshine* by the Glove, a duo consisting of Steve Severin and Robert that was made in 1983 when Robert did a brief stint with Siouxsie and the Banshees.

But the real band news is their latest album, *Mixed-Up*, a collection of Cure classics remixed by four of London's hottest DJ/producers: Mark Saunders, Paul Oakenfold, Bryan "Chuck" New, and William Orbit. (Among them, they are responsible for such dance faves as Neneh Cherry, Happy

**remixes. Welcome to the wacky world**

**of the Cure. An exclusive**

**report from London by LAUREN SPENCER.**



A partial Cure from left, Pori Thompson, Boris Williams, Perry Bamonte, Simon Gallup

Mondays, Lisa Stansfield, and Nilzer Ebb) *Mixed-Up* will definitely have clubs across the continent vibrating to duties such as a six minute-plus "In Between Days (Shiver Mix)." But the weird thing is, Robert hates to dance and thinks the whole Happy Mondays/Manchester rave craze is "a load of dross. I always hated disco. I like to watch other people dance—if they do it well—but I myself can't."

So how did this album come to be?

"Well, this didn't start off to be a dance record," Robert explains. "It started because people were trying to get a hold of old remixes and 12-inches and I saw this record collectors magazine that had the prices of singles and albums. I was having a look at what our singles were going for and I was stunned by how much they were on the market for. So, I thought, the [master] tapes are with us, why not put them out again. Then the idea started growing into more and more of a remix album. As it turned out there aren't that many of the ones I originally wanted to do on here," he laughs.

In the process of going through the tapes, it was discovered that the masters of *The Walk* EP and *Seventeen Seconds* had disappeared. "They actually used to keep them at our record company in the back hallway," says Robert, "and people would just

walk in and see them sitting there. I never realized just how important those tapes are to us." Rumor has it that a fan contacted the record company some time after the loss was discovered and offered some kind of deal in return for the tapes. When said person was informed that the authorities would look into it, the masters mysteriously reappeared. But in the interim, both "The Walk," and "A Forest" (from *Seventeen Seconds*) had to be re-recorded.

The album also contains a new single written and recorded last summer, "Never Enough." With a screaming Hendrix like guitar sound that hits hard, it's the most in your face rock'n'roll to come out of the Cure since their early days of "Killing an Arab."

"Yeah," says Perry. "It's surprising really because people get used to a certain Cure sound, and with this song you hear a really loud guitar riff, and it's not until Robert's voice comes in that you realize it's the Cure."

Guitarist Pori Thompson adds, with a sidelong glance at Robert, "Hendrix was an influence on one member of this band."

**T**HE VIDEO FOR "Never Enough" is what has brought them to Magic Eye Studio in London, where they are wrapping up the last of a two-day-and-into-the-night shoot for "Never Enough." The idea for the video came from the 1932 cult-horror movie *Freaks*, and the set is replete with a fun house and all manner of visual illusions created for a full-on trompe l'oeil effect. The song title appears apt, given the amount of costume changes and apparent deterioration the band has gone through within this 48-hour period. "We decay through seven levels of freakishness," says Robert. "We start off normal and then gradually get taken over by these characters. It works well because by the end you really feel like you're falling apart."

Tim Pope, who's been the Cure's only video director since 1982, still bears the black eye-makeup smudges from his role earlier as Turban Tim, the fortune teller. This is a family affair, and you can tell as you watch the band work with Pope that their relationship is based on mutual respect. Robert waits patiently while he is instructed to dangle from



# PAINT BLACK



Cure-FM from left, DJ Mike Halls, Robert Smith, Manager Chris Perry.

the waist through an open trapdoor, suspended six feet off the ground over a pan of water while lip-synching. It looks painful, but he does it over and over again on Tim's instruction. "The last video we did with Tim, I almost froze out in the snow," says Robert. "But we really work well with him. He likes to make you spot the clues. We'll film something and watch it later on and he'll just step back and wait for you to discover things. This is the first one we've done with storyboards, but," he adds with a laugh, "the boards you see downstairs really have little to do with what actually happens on the screen."

THE CURE'S CURRENT LINEUP has changed only slightly since the last album, *Disintegration*, in 1989. Simon on bass, Porl on guitars, Boris Williams on drums, most of the changes in this band seem to revolve around the keyboards. After the fairly well-publicized departure of founding member Lol Tolhurst, due to a very real bout with personal disintegration, Roger O'Donnell became the keys man. He isn't with the band any longer and has since been replaced by longtime roadie Perry. (The official line on the split with Roger was "musical differences," but the band's sentiments indicate there were personal differences as well.)

The decision to promote Perry from roadie to full fledged band member came pretty easily. "We could have hired a professional to take his place on the keyboards, but why not use someone who knows all the songs," Robert says. "Besides, I don't play all that well myself."

"Back when I started with the Cure, six years ago," says Perry, "they needed someone to be a guitar tech, but I'd usually end up doing all kinds of things. I still haven't really had time to put into words what it feels like to be onstage with them. When we were in Paris we did this concert out doors, and it was my first time playing live with them. It was an unannounced show—people found out about it only a couple of hours before we went on. That was the best thing for me, because it wasn't like going and having the hall filled up with Cure fans—that would have been more nerve-racking."

The Cure will be putting in studio time for a new album next year, and, although Robert has said before that they would not tour again, he may reconsider once the record is completed. "Robert was fairly adamant about not going on the road, but it was good fun doing the festivals," Perry says. "First, we weren't the main attraction—people were there

for the whole concert. We actually all had fun on this tour, but it makes sense to wait for a new album before we start planning another one."

**F**ORECASTING THE FUTURE of the Cure sometimes seems to be a favorite pastime of the music media. No Cure tour? Yes Cure tour? Band breaking up? Band back together? But Robert does not seem overly concerned with their reputation in rock'n' roll press circles. What seems to matter most is that the fans are behind them, because in the 12 years the Cure have been putting out records, they've flourished without any real chart-climbing success. The band has never had a No. 1 single in the U.K. (and only recently made the American charts with *Standing on a Beach*, a best hits collection released in 1986), yet their popularity is hard to ignore. Fan appreciation is expressed by scores of kids sporting black hair, heavy eyeliner, and shapeless black clothing. This fandom also knows no geography. When the Berlin wall came down last year, one of the pictures seen round the world was a section broken through with a graffiti scrawled next to it that read "The Cure."

The moody, often dark, brand of music the band writes lends itself quite well to candles, incense, and deep thought about the meaning of life. Stickers reading "Not for the Suicide Prone" might be more appropriate stamped on their albums than those reading "Explicit Lyrics." But it isn't all doom and gloom. In 1983, on the single "Let's Go to Bed," Robert sounded almost...um...playful. ("I'm not really such a depressed guy," Robert says. He is, in fact, a very funny guy.) And the inner sleeve of 1989's *Disintegration* contained the following recommendation: "This music has been mixed to be played loud, so turn it up"—not because it's kick ass rock'n'roll, but because the Cure's music has always hit a chord of such overwhelming emotion that it's best experienced at top volume.

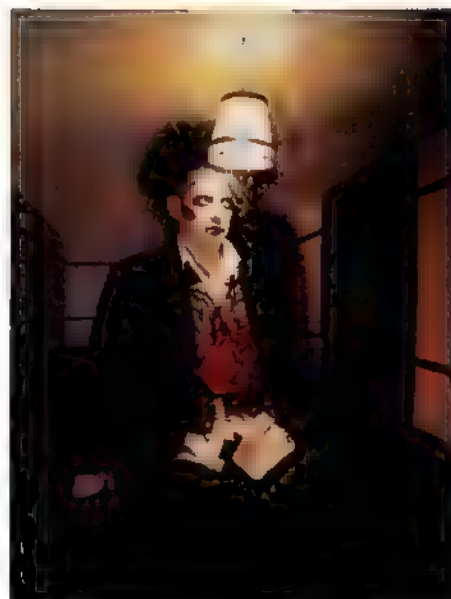
"I just love his lyrics," says Amy, a 17-year-old fan. "He's a poet." Do you like to dance? "Sometimes."

If the Cure put out a dance record, would you think it was weird?

"Not if you could still hear his words."

THE CURE'S FANS also know the band for their occasional pirating of radio frequencies, which was the case early one morning before *Mixed-Up* was due to be released. A location in Central London had been scouted out, and two American DJs from KROQ Los Angeles, and 91.X San Diego, were flown over especially for the pleasure of pinning the band down for on-air interviews. Estimated transmission time: 12:00 midnight.

The band, looking a bit worn out from their earlier video-making marathon, sit on a couch surrounded by family and friends. Robert is relating a grooming idea he had for the video: "I was thinking of shaving my head, little by little, up the sides, so that by the time the video was done, I'd end up with just a little bit on top." He pauses. "But that idea didn't go over well on the domestic front." The domestic front is a place that includes his lover of 15 years—now his wife—Mary. To see the two of them together is to witness a force field that seems



Robert sees the light.

almost impenetrable. No conversation needed. The track "Lovesong" off *Disintegration* (it has also been remixed for the new album) was a wedding present to her and is, he has said, "one of the most difficult songs I've had to sing.... It's an open show of emotion." She remains sitting quietly on the couch chatting with friends as Robert is dragged away to join the other band members at the radio console. The clock ticks over to 2:00 A.M. and Cure-FM is on the air.

Although 20,000 leaflets were handed out to potential listeners, probably only the hard-core fans have stuck by the radio for the two-hour delay. As



Wolfman Perry howls.

**In the 12 years the Cure have been putting out records, they have flourished without any real chart-climbing success.**

*Mixed-Up* makes its debut, strains of the Beach Boys muddy the frequency. It seems Radio BBC-2 is mounting a straight-on MOR attack, with Frank Sinatra being used as heavy artillery. No one in the makeshift studio seems to care—they are all too busy arguing over their favorite songs. The next single on the turntable is a 20-minute-long Cure remake of the Doors' "Hello, I Love You" for an upcoming 40th-anniversary Elektra album.

"I don't really like the Doors," says Robert, "but we listened to everything that was offered and the stuff we liked we couldn't do. When I heard 'Hello, I Love You' it was quite a shocker because it reminded me more of the Kinks' 'You Really Got Me.'" As they sing a few bars of the Kinks classic, the studio breaks up with laughter. And even if only a few stalwart listeners heard this impromptu performance, it doesn't seem to matter, because, as Robert announces, "This band knows how to have a good time." But then he adds, "Can't I go home now?"



MARGARITAS WITH ALL THE TRIMMINGS.

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# replacements r.i.p.

IS IT THE END OF THE

ROAD FOR AMERICA'S

UNSUNG ROCK HEROES?

AMY LINDEN TALKS TO THE BAND IN

MINNEAPOLIS DURING A WALKING

TOUR OF OLD WATERING HOLES.



Chris Mars, Paul Westerberg, Tommy Stinson, and Slim Dunlap (back to front).

IT'S AUGUST IN MINNEAPOLIS, and head Replacement Paul Westerberg is polishing off his second nonalcoholic beer. Maybe not forever, but as of right now he's not drinking. Each member of the group is approaching sobriety in his own fashion. Tommy Stinson will say bluntly that they are the sons of alcoholics, as he tentatively orders a beer. Slim Dunlap declares that he has a "good decade left of drinking" in him. Yet they are all deferring to Paul's own decision to cool it. Don't look for banner headlines screaming "The Mats Clean Up" or self-congratulatory spiels about the glories of being clean; it ain't their style and none of them are huckling for sainthood. But this has been a year the band wouldn't mind trading in for another. They came off a tour that damn near did them in, and the status of the group changes like the weather.

"If the band stays together, I imagine we'll be stronger than ever," Paul says quietly, fiddling with the label on his near beer. He smokes constantly (he swears he's gonna quit, although he seems to cherish the few bad habits he has left). "I told them individually one night, 'Hey, the next time out, I wanna do it by myself.' If they say no, that creates trouble. I can't say, 'Well okay, you're right, we'll make a great band record.' I didn't have a great band record in me. So we compromised." To many, the compromise sounds an awful lot like the rumored Paul Westerberg solo disc; a disc he claims was vetoed by the record company due to his lack of name recognition.

Naturally the question is, What's the difference between a Replacements and a Paul Westerberg record? He smiles. "You tell me. That's the \$45 question."

"I DON'T KNOW." That's the phrase that pays. Bo may know physics, but the Mats don't know shit about their future. Paul may jokingly muse that "I don't know" is a great expression, but for the boys in the band the fact that he "don't know" makes the situation a wee bit wiggly.

Chris Mars and Slim Dunlap are the forgotten Replacements. We are at the Walker Art Center, a sparkling white museum that Slim has never set foot in. Chris has, and he is playing tour guide as we weave through the galleries and head towards the terrace. They want to know what Paul said about them; it's asked in a lighthearted manner, but then again, it's not a lighthearted question.

"If you find out what's going on with the band give me a call," Slim says, laughing. "The last couple months have been kinda hairy. We all left the recording of the record wondering what exactly was going on"—he pauses—"but we'll see. If we're gonna tour again it's gonna be because we wanna do it again. We did it last year and something kinda died for us."

"We sort of lost the spark a little bit on the last tour," Chris interjects. "The band is up in the air for everybody. We can't say it's ending, we can't say it's going on. We just don't know at this point."

Later that day, when Paul and I meet to continue our survey of mineral waters, he asks how my talk with Chris and Slim went, adding, "What did they say about me?"

At the root of all this Hamletian Marshall-stack stuff is a decade-plus friendship between them. They have known each other since high school. (Or in Tommy's case, junior high, when he stole his car.) Paul says, "What made the Replacements mean more than all the other bands out there was the implied knowledge that the drop heroes came from the heart and not from a manager's playbook. Yet for all the rumored danger and disturbance surrounding the Mats, there's an element that's a little kinder. There's hardly a whiff of macho posturing; mostly, there's a love/hate between them. It's evident in the way Slim speaks of his admiration for Paul's talent and in the fact that they are willing to put the group on hold to deal with the maelstrom in his head. It's there when Paul tells the ridiculous story about paying a cabdriver 40 bucks to drive him to Sunset Boulevard backward. Or when Paul refers to Tommy as his "partner in crime."

Sometimes between having a hit single and finding themselves opening up for the Beatles, the Replacements got themselves a little too close to the flame. It should have been a moment of redemption. Instead, all hell broke loose, and in Paul's words, they became "too much of a band and forgot to be friends."

Chris leans back in his chair on the terrace overlooking a sculpture garden. "It was mutual dissolution. We saw the end result of what we could become."

WE'RE WALKING THE STREETS of Minneapolis. Paul is pointing out various highlights: the first club they played in, the restaurant where former guitarist Bob Stinson works, the theater he saw Rockpile in. To the outside world, the Replacements might be fairly decent-sized cheeses, but in their hometown, it doesn't seem like anyone has any idea who Paul is. At another bar, a youngish fan shyly asks Paul for an autograph, and he gives it with a sense of relief that someone recognizes him. Paul tells me about going to an all-ages show with his kid sister, at a club that the band played years ago, and realizing that the crowd there was

continued on page 101

# HACK

THE MID STORY THIS ISSUE:

## INFORMATION SOCIETY.. MAN OR MYTH ?



HACKERS OF

THE WORLD

ARE ON

THEIR OWN

GAME

HACK

THE NEW ALBUM

THEY'VE AWAITED FOR HOW LONG TO THEIR PLS. HAVING TO BE IN



ADD WITH US

WE'VE BEEN WAITING FOR HOW LONG TO THEIR PLS. HAVING TO BE IN

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# attitude

For once, Neil Young doesn't spook the Horse,

**W**ELL WE GOT IT. Crazy Horse—the mother lode. I think yer even gonna like this one.” That’s what Neil Young told

me on the phone a few months ago. I was skeptical. Nearly all the records he made in the '80s were stiff genre experiments that pointedly avoided the personal, and his band Crazy Horse depends on Young's emotional availability. Sooner or later he'd fuck up this record, too, by burying it in synthesizers or maybe a lame horn section. But Young was insistent. This was straight ahead rock'n'roll—two guitars, bass, and drums. Playing with the Horse in the studio the night before had felt so good that Young didn't even notice an earthquake going on during one of the songs. “The vibe was so strong,” he said.

Could Neil Young pull off another great record with Crazy Horse? Nothing he's done with the band in the past ten years has seemed to go right. Critics of the Horse say the band is just too primitive and too inept to keep up with Young's changes; others feel Young's pretentious forays into rockabilly, country, and the blues made the simplicity of Crazy Horse impossible. Obviously the situation frustrated Young, and nowhere is that more evident than in a hilarious scene from *Muddy Truck*, his as-yet-unreleased Video-8 documentary of Crazy Horse's '87 European tour. We see Young teaching the band a new song; then they rehearse it again and again. Finally they premiere the song onstage and the band fucks it up so badly that a furious Young stops them midway through and makes them start over. Backstage, Young rips into bassist Billy Talbot. “Everybody knew the fucking arrangement,” he screams. “We prac-

as **JIMMY McDONOUGH**  
gives him some free rein.

ticed all fuckin' day! I sat down and even made you a fuckin' tape! What was I doin'—jerkin' off for ya?”

IN JULY, I got a chance to ask longtime Young sideman and Crazy Horse rhythm guitarist Frank ‘Poncho’ Sampedro where the jerking-off began. The band was nearly done mixing the new album and I'd been invited along to hear it. As we drove up and down the winding roads that led to the Malibu studio, Sampedro—a broad, friendly man with an infectious laugh whose manner is more like a pirate than a musician—discussed the album on which Crazy Horse's tailspin started: 1981's *Reactor*. Recorded while Young was preoccupied with a grueling learning program for his handicapped son, Ben, the album never really jelled.

“A lotta the tracks didn't groove all the way through, like ‘Surfer Joe,’ ” remembers Sampedro. “The groove would slow down, then speed up. So instead of tryin' to recut 'em, we would spend all our time hittin' everything we could find to fill the holes in the song. Y'know, banging tambourines, pieces of metal, standing around doing hand claps. We didn't understand why we were doing this. But we also didn't understand how distracted Neil was. He just wanted to get through it.”

The band—with the exception of drummer Ralph Molina—was abruptly fired off the sessions for Young's synth album, *Trans*. They didn't reunite again until 1984, when they performed two nights of blistering live shows at a club not far from Young's home. He had written great new material for the band—mostly wicked speed-metal rockers—but once he got the band in the studio, things fell apart. “Neil was on this trip to get the drums

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANTON CORBIJN





to sound big," says Sampedro. "So they had us separated, in different rooms. We were wearin' headphones; we had no visual contact—it just sucked. We were playin' terrible. And Neil was gettin' feedback on his guitar and he kept complaining about it every day for four or five days and it never worked out. Nothing worked out. Finally that last day, he had that feedback in his head and threw his earphones off, took his guitar, and smashed it against the wall. He started yellin', 'This trip's over! Everybody's outta here! Everybody just go fucking home!' Of course, a few days later, he called me up and said, 'I didn't mean you guys.'"

Still in search of the big drum sound, Young took the band to the Power Station in New York City. By this time everyone was too inhibited to play. "We spent days in the studio changing everything around for the drums," says Sampedro. "We were just chasing our tails. And these horn players Neil hired were drinkin' cough syrup. Everybody was getting out of it. Then we all got sick." Sampedro remembers lying in a feverish daze on a couch in the studio, the sound of five hundred drums beating endlessly in his head. "It was a bad trip. What a terrible feeling flying home from that session. We hadn't accomplished anything."

Young didn't reunite with the band again until the fall of '85, which resulted in a couple of lackluster tours and a halfhearted record, *Life*. Early into the *This Note's for You* sessions, the band was fired again—this time the exception was Sampedro. The split was a bitter one, and Young vowed he'd never work with the Horse again.

What changed his mind? Part of it, Young would tell me later, was going through the piles of unreleased material and videotaped performances for his upcoming anthology, *Decade Two*. "When I went back and looked... I saw where I liked it and where I didn't like it. I saw that a lot of the things I thought were cool weren't cool, and a lot of the things I didn't think were that good *were* good. And that some of the things I thought were great *were* really great." One of the great things was the way he had played with the Horse, and in February of this year he called a meeting with the band so everybody could air their grievances. By June, the band was recording and, three months later, *Ragged Glory* was done.

This time out, Young went to great lengths not to intimidate the Horse, as Sampedro tells me in the car. "On this record—and at first I thought it was really weird—we weren't allowed to listen to any of

the playbacks. We just kept recording and recording. It's a funny thing, one of the new songs—'Mansion on the Hill'—we almost didn't get because we thought we had it and we heard some playbacks and the one version we had slowed down, and the other one we sped up. As soon as we start thinkin'



Neil Young faces his future, while riding with the Horse.

about shit like that, it's like, 'What's the problem? Do we have a problem? How do we cure the problem? Oh God, we got a *problem*.' When we go in and listen to everything... we just lose it. So it was a good idea not to listen. For this band it doesn't work."

**Usually if Young performs a song for any length of time without recording it, it's time to sound the alarm, because next thing you know he'll get the London Symphony on the phone or be flying off to Jamaica to record the reggae version.**

THE STUDIO WHERE *Ragged Glory* is being mixed is surrounded by woods, rocks, and the Pacific Ocean; it's a ramshackle house in the middle of nowhere. No wonder Young likes it. Once inside I run into David Briggs, coproducer of Young's most in-

tense rock'n'roll records, among them *Everybody Knows This Is Nowhere* and *Zuma*. With his sad, droopy eyes and tanned, gentlemanly manner, Briggs resembles a cross between Peter O'Toole and a beaten dog. He gives me the once-over and goes back to rolling his joint. "So you're the writer, huh?" he asks, friendly sarcasm lacing his Wyoming drawl. "I hear you don't drink or get high. What the hell *do* you do? I still get high, even if nobody else does." He scurries back into the studio, joint in hand.

The house begins filling up with local musicians, assorted hangers-on, and whatever other Malibu flotsam has been rounded up to test the record on an audience. Sampedro is sprawled out on a couch, watching TV and trading baseball tips with Tim Mulligan, Young's resident wizard of sound.

Soon Billy Talbot and drummer Ralph Molina arrive. What a pair. Talbot, skinny and manic, speaks in a sandpapered voice that never stops; Molina is the silent type who spends most of the evening leaning against a wall, hiding under his baseball cap, and looking unimpressed with everything. Californians for nearly 30 years, the two still possess that New York City cool of their teenage years. Both got their start singing doo-

wop. "That was our roots," says Talbot, wistfully. "I got into the hard-core doo-wop groups of New York City, the ones that were really funky and soulful, even a bit weird." He could've been describing the harmonies on the record I was about to hear.

Eventually Young stumbles in, looking worn out from a same-day trip to San Francisco and back, for a meeting at the Bridge School, the educational program for severely physically handicapped non-speaking children that both he and his wife Pegi are founding members of. Before long we are all filing into the studio, and on the way in I notice the soon-to-be album cover fixed to the wall—a murky fish-eye shot of the band with Young's nervous handwriting scrawled across it. The cover has that fucked-up, homemade look of his finest records. Tacked beneath the cover is a one-word sign in big block letters: ATTITUDE.

I grab a chair behind the mixing board. These guys were my heroes—they made records that had changed my life, then squandered their talents completely. What if this was just another piece of shit? Then the shimmering chords to "Country Home" come blasting out of the speakers. The kind of deceptively simple song Young excels at. I know it well from the '75 and '76 tours. But this version makes me forget the past: long, emotional guitar so-

los, impassioned singing, and tight, soaring harmonies. And never has the Horse been recorded so clearly. It's like they are sitting inside my ear.

**U**SUALLY IF YOUNG performs a song for any length of time without recording it, it's time to sound the alarm, because next thing you know he'll get the London Symphony on the phone or be flying off to Jamaica to record the reggae version. It's as if he gets so bored with the material he'll do anything to keep it fresh, even ruin it. That's not the case with "Country Home," "White Line," "Days That Used to Be," and "Why Do I Keep Fuckin' Up?"—all four of which have been kicking around for various amounts of time. For once, the recorded versions equal any live performance of theirs I've heard. A thunderous rocker, "Fuckin' Up" captures all the anger and rage of Young's best work. The lyrics are full of self loathing and dread. After the song careens through an instrumental break that sounds uglier than an exploding beehive—with Young's cry of "Keep fuckin' up" barely heard above the din—the song crashes to a halt like so many others on the record, with a droning one-note feedback held so ridiculously long you contemplate the meaning of life.

With the newest songs on the record, Young leaves his anger behind. The subject is love and how even the most fucked-up among us can learn to accept it, yet the songwriting is tough and spare, not mawkish like so many of Young's more conventional love songs. And while, at times, the instrumental jams go so far out on a limb you lose track of what song you're listening to, this only adds to the heady groove. It's like prime Al Green or James Brown—sure the words are good, but get me to that funky bridge, man. By the time the harmonies swoop back in on the chorus you want to pass out.

Which is what I could've done once the playback was over. I was drained, sweaty from banging the arms of my chair to the music. Around me are a bunch of confused faces, obviously too much in awe of Young to say much of anything. "I love Neil Young," says a blonde, happily, to someone in the corner. "I listened to *Comes a Time* on the drive up here." Hoo baby, did you pick the wrong record to prepare yourself, I think.

Young begins ranting about "Don't Spook the Horse," a song that would eventually wind up as the B side of the single. Just to add a little down-home flavor to the recording, and inspired by Crazy Horse's inability to record when the vibe isn't right, Young stood in a bucket of cow manure while he sang the tune. He got so excited talking about it that we ran back into the studio to listen. "Man, you thought 'T Bone' was obnoxious," says Young with a smirk, obviously looking forward to a reaction. Since "T Bone" was a tuneless nine-minute-plus song about a plate of food, which was more boring than anything else on *Re-actor*, I begin to shudder. But from the opening notes I know Young is mistaken. A slow grind that threatens to rumble to a halt more than once during its nearly eight minute running time, "Don't Spook the Horse"—along with "Farmer John"—nails completely that grungy we-don't-know-the-song-and-we-don't-care groove the Horse rarely gets on record.

"If you're gonna mess around with that chick / Be



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**W**HEN PRESIDENT RICHARD M. NIXON set up the EPA on December 2, 1970, he apparently had higher expectations. Merging environmental activities which until then were dispersed throughout the federal government, Nixon declared that a "strong, independent agency is needed" because "arresting environmental deterioration is of great

## WHY THE

importance to the quality of life in our country and the world." The new agency, he said, would "insure the protection, development, and enhancement" of the environment.

To be sure, the most graphic forms of pollution have disappeared during the EPA's watch. The Great Lakes are no longer open sewers, and the

## ENVIRONMENT

searing image of the Cuyahoga River catching fire in Cleveland fades from memory. Black clouds of soot no longer darken steel towns. DDT, the insecticide responsible for thinning the eggshells of brown pelicans and threatening the food chain, was banned long ago.

But more intractable problems have taken root under a policy of benign neglect. Since the first evidence that CFCs (chlorofluorocarbons) were punching holes in the stratospheric ozone layer in the 1970s, the vaporous veil has frayed significantly, increasing exposure to dangerous ultraviolet radiation on earth. The Great Lakes, largely cleansed of raw sewage, have become pools of toxic substances originally emitted into the air by unregulated industrial processes. Urban smog has spread to 100 metropolitan areas, penetrating pristine national parks and communities once considered oases for the hard-of-breathing. Underground rivers of industrial waste poison sources of community drinking water. New England's foliage and lakes smother in the acidic fallout of uncontrolled power plants. And nearly a third of new and remodeled offices contain unhealthy levels of chemicals emitted from building materials and furnishings.

The EPA is a convenient whipping boy for the nation's environmental ills. In fairness, however, it can be no better than its masters in the White House. The high expectations of the Nixon years, peaked by Earth Day of 1970, were sabotaged by the energy and economic crunches of the Ford and Carter administrations. These were not times to impose costly environmental controls on industry.

But the real tragedy of the EPA is that it spent nearly half its life under Ronald Reagan, who once called trees a major source of air pollution and sug-

**C**AROL BASS GOES TO work every day in a gas mask. Like a laborer handling hazardous chemicals, she dons the bulky gear to keep from getting sick. But Bass is not a factory hand. She fills a desk in a modern Washington, D.C., office so steeped in indoor pollutants its employees call it the toxic waste dump.

The rest of the world knows it as headquarters of the Environmental Protection Agency.

When Bass and dozens of her colleagues began lodging serious health complaints in 1988, they brought the dangers of "sick buildings" to the public's attention. But their plight came to symbolize much more, the last gasp of an agency born 20 years ago with great hope that has fallen far short of its mandate. The guardian of the nation's environment can't even provide a healthy environment for its own employees.

In many ways, Carol Bass is the poster-child orphan of the EPA: The fatigue and breathing troubles she experiences at work represent the suffering of unprotected pollution victims nationwide—the children who lose IQ points from the lead they consume in tap water; cancer patients who live downwind of carcinogenic, industrial emissions; asthmatics who choke on air pollution; communities drowning in toxic waste; farmers who drink

from wells laced with pesticides; and sugar maple growers who watch acid rain wither their trees.

"People think EPA is there to protect them," says Bass, an environmental engineer. "The fact is that EPA doesn't do that. There's something missing."

As top government pollution buster, the EPA has enough legal muscle to protect the public health. But more often it acts like a 90-pound weakling. Instead of dictating tough cures, it has spent much of the past 20 years postponing or ignoring them, of ten in defiance of Congress and compelling evidence of need, it has handed out concessions to whole classes of polluters. The EPA is so cowed by special interests—so ready to accommodate big business—it is often derided as the "Industry Protection Agency."

Even the few environmental successes for which the EPA now takes credit were all but force-fed to the agency by Congress or public interest groups, which have emerged in the breach as a kind of shadow EPA. With their own scientists and lawyers, the groups document environmental problems and lobby Congress for tougher laws. They skillfully advance their objectives through the media. They sue to enforce environmental statutes. And, according to public opinion surveys, they do it all more effectively and faithfully than the agency supported by taxpayers.



gested that oil slicks off the California coast purify the sea breezes. Campaigning in 1980 to rein in the EPA, Reagan waited several months before naming its administrator. His choice was Anne M. Burford, a protégée of the ultraconservative Colorado beer magnate Joseph Coors. She had little background in environmental protection but proved a reliable hachetman for the President, proposing to slash nearly half of the agency's 1981 budget by 1983. Enforcement activities were drastically cut.

The EPA's integrity suffered an equal loss. Within two years, Burford's EPA was the target of numerous Congressional investigations into the alleged conflicts of interest, mismanagement, and political manipulation of agency programs. Officials were accused of using the \$1.6 billion Superfund toxic waste cleanup program to aid the campaigns of local Republican candidates. Others were accused of

reaching Kennebunkport, Maine, where the Republican presidential candidate summered. The staggering heat and drought lent sudden urgency to the warnings of global warming, caused by the build-up of industrial gases that hover high above the earth's crust and trap solar heat like a greenhouse.

That summer became a kind of ecological Kristallnacht, turning the environment into a winning political issue and Bush into a born-again environmentalist. Suddenly he was touring filthy Boston Harbor to decry water pollution. He pledged to use the "White House effect" to combat the greenhouse effect, preserve wetlands, speed up cleanups of toxic waste, and strengthen clean air laws.

As President, Bush quickly broke with his Reaganite past. For the EPA's helm, he appointed the first professional environmentalist ever to lead the agency—William K. Reilly, then president of the World Wildlife Fund and Conservation Foundation.

fore they got out of hand.

"We want vigor, we want muscle, we want confidence and action from the agency," he said.

**T**O EPA SKEPTICS, Reilly's goals are as quixotic as those of a captain of a rusty vessel setting out for a rescue mission on a stormy night. Given the extent of environmental deterioration and the agency's limited resources, the task seems formidable.

The nation's air pollution laws are so inadequate that more than half of the population lives in areas that violate health standards. Even cities like Phoenix and Denver, where millions of Americans once fled in search of clean air, are now off limits for many asthmatics and heart patients.

"Where can I go for clean air?" asks Bernie Bernstein, 73, a retired businessman in Phoenix. A victim of sinus troubles, he left Chicago in 1952 for the

## ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

improper contacts with chemical companies involved in pending decisions.

Burford resigned under pressure in March 1983. Her replacement, William D. Ruckelshaus, restored stability but not the regulatory momentum halted by years of scandal and indifference.

The most lasting damage to the environment was orchestrated by the White House. Two days after his inauguration, Reagan set up the Presidential Task Force on Regulatory Relief to dismantle regulations that industry considered "excessive." Vice President George Bush was appointed chairman and almost immediately sent letters to corporate executives asking for deregulatory wish lists. Bush responded to these requests like a polluter's genie, postponing or shelving dozens of EPA regulations within six months. He was especially generous to automakers, loosening air pollution controls for savings of \$1.3 billion over five years.

**In 1970, Richard M. Nixon launched the EPA with enough legal muscle to end industrial assaults on the environment. As MICHAEL WEISSKOPF reports, the federal agency has turned out to be a 90-pound weakling.**

**I**RONICALLY, THE ENVIRONMENTAL COSTS came home seven years later when Bush was running for president in 1988. It was the summer from hell, day after day of suffocating smog, dead porpoises, forest fires, defoliated trees, and hypodermic needles littering beaches. Foul air became epidemic, with unhealthy levels in 101 cities—60 percent more than the previous year—and for the first time

Reilly owes his stripes to the environmental community, not the world of politics, and thus brings to the job a commitment and independence rare for an EPA administrator. In office, he has fought unflinchingly for environmental causes despite persistent opposition from more conservative political operatives, such as White House Chief of Staff John

H. Sununu and Budget Director Richard G. Darman, who view pollution controls as an expensive fad.

The EPA Reilly inherited was "badly beleaguered," he says, "by years of political abuse," saddled with policies that had "failed miserably," and "wary of political leadership. It did not feel like a first-class, front-line agency."

Reilly was quoted as saying in an interview, "What I hoped to do was reinvigorate the agency with a sense that we have a role of leadership to play in the United States and worldwide." He wanted to restore credibility in the agency's research and regulations, reshape corporate and consumer habits for handling waste, correct historical insults to the environment, and respond to new ones be-

clean, dry air of the desert at the recommendation of his doctor. But as his adopted home grew, so did the pall of pollution, known as the brown cloud, which now seeps across the valley, obscuring the pastel hues of the Southwest landscape and causing Bernstein's sinuses to sting and his chest to tighten. Today, the air of Phoenix so thickens with

## DOESN'T WORK

pollution that Bernstein rarely leaves home, and his doctor has recently given him familiar advice: Move to a town with clean air.

Few cities in America could meet this criteria 20 years after Congress passed the Clean Air Act, the nation's flagship environmental law and its most comprehensive. The EPA was deputized to set health standards for the most pervasive pollutants and ride herd on state governments to assure the standards were implemented by 1975.

But the agency approved plans with overly optimistic goals, and when states failed to live up to them, the agency did little to bring laggards into line. Although the 1975 deadline has been extended twice and scores of cities are still far from compliance with health standards, the EPA has only rarely used its power to impose a federal program requiring cuts in emissions from cars and factories.

Nor has the EPA controlled "hazardous" pollutants, which can cause serious, irreversible illness, including cancer and fetal damage, in such tiny doses that Congress wanted them controlled at the





**no.**



**no.**



**no.**



**yes.**



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# AIDS

WORDS FROM THE FRONT

## Is CFIDS, or Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, actually AIDS "minor"?

**NICHOLAS REGUSH** reports on new evidence linking CFIDS to a virus similar to HIV.

IT'S LATE AUGUST. The phone rings. Dr. Paul Cheney, who practices medicine in Charlotte, North Carolina, is returning my call. We get down to basics quickly. The rumors flying around are true. He and several associates have detected pieces of what may be a new virus in people suffering from Chronic Fatigue and Immune Dysfunction Syndrome, or CFIDS (pronounced *sif-ids*). And it's definitely a retrovirus, a cousin of sorts to HIV, which most scientists believe causes AIDS. The full details of the study will be presented at a medical conference in Japan in a week, he says.

It's startling news, considering CFIDS is still often labeled "yuppie flu," a derogatory reference to burned-out over achievers. Many people who suffer from varying symptoms such as overwhelming fatigue, severe muscular aches, swollen lymph nodes, sleep disturbances, memory loss, and confusion have been written off as malingerers by family, friends, employers, insurance companies, and even by doctors.

And now, seemingly out of the blue, yet another retrovirus looms large in what appears to be a widespread disease. Some estimates even place the number of CFIDS cases in the U.S. at several million. And from all accounts, CFIDS affects people from all walks of life and also sometimes appears to attack in clusters, even affecting entire families.

Cheney raises the stakes considerably by suggesting that CFIDS and AIDS are closely related. He even refers to CFIDS as "AIDS minor."

"At least 10 percent of CFIDS cases look like AIDS," Cheney says. These patients have significant depletions in key immune-system cells known as helper T-cells. In other words, they are immune-suppressed. Healthy people have about 1,000 of these cells in every cubic millimeter of blood. CFIDS T-cell counts appear to plateau around 500, and people pick up some of the infections seen in



AIDS, including skin infections and a fungal infection called thrush, which causes painful sores on the tongue. Skin infections such as acne are also quite common. Acne, for example, appears in women who never had it before.

"But in CFIDS," Cheney continues, "we don't see the lethal infections that occur in AIDS." In AIDS, T-cell counts continue to drop.

Dr. Cheney is not alone in concluding CFIDS involves immune suppression. Last June, for example, Nancy Klimas and associates at the University of Miami reported in the *Journal of Clinical Microbiology* that they found immune deficiency in all subjects studied with CFIDS. They even referred to

CFIDS as an "acquired immune deficiency." And Austraban researchers reported last year in the *Medical Journal of Australia* that "disordered immunity may be central to the pathogenesis of Chronic Fatigue Syndrome." Also, numerous studies show a deficiency of NKs, natural killer cells that are a component of the immune system and are responsible for protection against viruses and cancer—in people with CFIDS (see AIDS: Words From the Front, June '90).

But CFIDS appears to involve more than the suppression of immunity. "In most cases of CFIDS," Cheney says, "the immune system seems to be turned on, whereas in AIDS, the system is completely turned off." In this respect, he adds, "CFIDS and AIDS appear to be mirror images of each other."

Soon there may even be a blood test for CFIDS that would detect overactive immune response. A research team headed by Jay Levy at the University of California at San Francisco claims it will unveil such a test within months.

CHENEY'S HUNT for a CFIDS virus began back in 1984. Then 37, he was in private practice in Incline Village, a Nevada resort town on the northeast shore of Lake Tahoe. That year, he and

partner Dr. Daniel Peterson were deluged by more than 100 patients, who turned up at their office complaining of disabling fatigue, aching muscles, swollen lymph nodes, and flu-like symptoms. Some townsfolk, who were angered by the bad-for-business publicity the cluster of medical cases was generating, scoffed at the so-called epidemic. Surely this was some sort of "yuppie flu," they would say. Wasn't it interesting that most of the patients were well-educated and affluent? Tearing around on burned-out cylinders, no doubt.

But the symptoms their patients exhibited appeared real enough to Cheney and Peterson. They thought the cause might be Epstein-Barr virus. It



was associated with mononucleosis, and mono brings on weakness and fatigue. Initial blood tests of patients suggested Cheney and Peterson were on track, but later government studies also detected elevated levels of the virus in so-called healthy people. So the doctors continued their virus hunt. Meanwhile, the term "yuppie flu" was catching on, especially in the media.

Unexpectedly, several blood samples that Cheney and Peterson sent to a lab in Los Angeles showed signs of a retrovirus infection. It was HTLV-1, a controversial virus which had been linked to T-cell leukemia by Japanese scientists and Dr. Robert Gallo's lab at the National Cancer Institute in Bethesda, Maryland. Other scientists doubted claims for HTLV-1 because the vast majority of people with signs of the virus in their blood appear perfectly healthy. For example, less than 1 in 100 people exposed to the virus in Japan, where it is now known to be quite common, have developed leukemia. While Gallo was claiming the virus will cause leukemia over several decades (just as he claims HIV can lead to AIDS over a period of up to eight years), some of his critics were dismissing HTLV-1 as merely a passenger virus that plays no role in disease. No matter, because HIV was then being strongly promoted as the sole cause of AIDS; Cheney and Peterson were excited by the Los Angeles laboratory results. They initially thought they had identified the causes of CFIDS.

But their viral roller-coaster ride continued when another lab nixed the results from Los Angeles. Still hoping that HTLV-1 was the culprit in CFIDS, Cheney asked Elaine DeFreitas, an immunologist at the Wistar Institute in Philadelphia, known for its work on the virus, to check out some blood samples. Again, no go.

Three years later, Cheney, now practicing in Charlotte and more convinced than ever that CFIDS is a real biological disease, trained his attention once again on HTLV-1. By then the virus had gained some notoriety—again controversially so—as the cause of some rare neuromuscular disorders. One of Cheney's patients had come down with signs of muscular atrophy in his calf. The man had previously developed a variety of symptoms but had tested negative twice for antibodies to HIV positive. But when Cheney tested him the first time, the test came back positive and was confirmed by a second test. Several repeats of the test, however, came back negative. What on earth was going on? Cheney speculated that the man might have an HTLV-1 infection, possibly accounting for the atrophy in his calf, and that the virus was confounding the HIV antibody test.

This led to more testing at Wistar, and after more than two years of research—on September 4, 1990, at a medical conference in Kyoto, Japan—Elaine DeFreitas presented the results of the study. It showed 82 percent of blood samples from 11 adults with CFIDS and 74 percent of blood samples from 19 children with CFIDS had turned up gene segments of a virus similar to both HTLV-1 and HTLV-2, a retrovirus that has been isolated from a patient with "hairy cell" leukemia, a rare form of the disease. None of ten healthy adults in the control group and none of ten newborn babies of healthy mothers showed any signs of such virus cells in their blood. There were no signs of HIV in any of the experimental subjects or controls.

DeFreitas was very cautious in presenting the re-



**Some estimates place the number of CFIDS cases in the U.S. at several million. And from all accounts, CFIDS affects people from all walks of life and sometimes appears in clusters, even affecting entire families.**

sults, emphasizing that the data pointed to a strong association between the retroviral segments and CFIDS. By no means were the researchers claiming to have found the cause of CFIDS. A lot more research was necessary, she said.

But given the complexity of research politics these days, the researchers, including DeFreitas and Cheney, did not refrain from boiling the pot a little by also emphasizing the same viral fragments were found in people in close, nonsexual contact with the experimental subjects. Given that retroviruses are only known to spread in humans through blood, sex, and birth, suggesting the viral agent might have been casually transmitted certainly made the news everywhere. But a week later at a press conference in San Francisco, DeFreitas and Cheney downplayed this aspect of the research, saying the study had not been designed to

explore viral transmission. They had included the result in their report because they were surprised by it. Or so they said. Under questioning by reporters they also admitted to being aware of the powerful public health implications.

**T**WO WEEKS AFTER the announcement in Japan, the phone rings. It's Cheney, once again returning my call. There is good news and bad news. The bad first: He and his associates are taking a lot of flak from scientists who continue to hold to the "yuppie flu" theory. Among them is Dr. Stephen Strauss of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID). He has postulated that CFIDS is a "psychoneurotic disease." Strauss essentially suggested to an audience of scientists in Toronto that the Wistar findings are probably a crock. In his words: "The techniques used to identify the suspect virus are fraught with potential complications."

Cheney is not amused. "We used three different technologies to reach our conclusions," he says, "and we tested and retested over more than two years. We were very careful. The work goes on to see if we can pull the entire virus out. This may take a while."

Cheney is still willing to admit that their suspect virus might turn out to be unrelated to CFIDS. The virus may actually be a "marker," he says, that becomes activated due to damaged immunity but does not cause CFIDS itself. "Or agent 'X' may play a role, but may not be enough to cause illness. There may, for example, be underlying genetic issues."

Some other as yet unidentified CFIDS virus, which destabilizes the immune system, he says, may be covered, adding that it could have a subtle effect and cause disease in only certain individuals. For that matter, there may be many agents involved in CFIDS.

The good news is the growing CFIDS patient and research community is still abuzz over the retrovirus thesis. Several U.S. researchers are trying to check out the Wistar findings. Dr. Byron Hyde, an Ottawa-based CFIDS specialist, has helped to convince the Canadian Health Department to open up its laboratories to scientists, who wish to test CFIDS patients for signs of retroviruses. And, of course, the retrovirus thesis is attracting considerable media attention. In short, CFIDS is now getting some respect.

I tell Cheney I'm getting a sense of déjà vu. Now, CFIDS research—as was the case with AIDS—may be building toward the unveiling of a single causal agent. Will research begin to exclude other theoretical avenues (as continues to be the case with AIDS)? And can the antiviral pills be very far behind?

On the other hand, scientifically ruling out a retroviral component in CFIDS could prompt some researchers to reappraise the HIV theory of AIDS. And a broader understanding of CFIDS, including the settings in which the illness appears to flourish, may shed important light on AIDS, assuming the illnesses are somehow related.

Unlike most AIDS researchers I've encountered who become fidgety, angry, and often belligerent when the HIV theory of AIDS is challenged, Cheney seems to be aware of the potential pitfalls of putting all the CFIDS eggs in one basket.

"It all bears watching," he says.

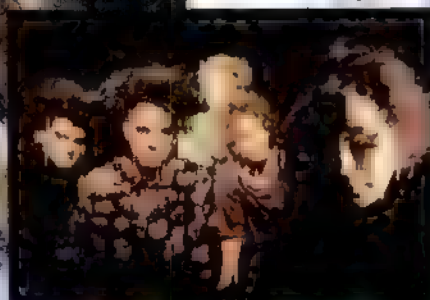
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# CURE



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ACTION



## GEORGE MICHAEL

*Listen Without Prejudice,*

Vol. 1

Columbia

## PAUL SIMON

*The Rhythm of the Saints*

Warner Bros.

## BOB DYLAN

*Under the Red Sky*

Columbia

JONATHAN BERNSTEIN: Drop everything—he's back. George Michael the way you always wanted him. Raw. Rough. Untamed. Wild.

STEVEN DALY: New direction?

JB: New beard.

SD: Well, I won't be risking stubble burn. Me and the pencil-necked Greek parted company when he went from horny hack to sensitive songsmith.

JB: You can't deny that he's a great intuitive songwriter, though: lyrically acute, melodically audacious...

SD: ...and thematically bodacious—the sun bed Sondheim, in fact.

JB: Try to *Listen Without Prejudice, Vol. 1* to his new ideas.

SD: Omigod—he's gone from Costello of the border to a bleeding heartthrob who wants us to look at what we're doing to Our Planet. And—if I may quote—it looks like "guilty feet have got no rhythm." Heh heh

JB: Always growing always reaching.

Steve. Listen to

gled with the master musicians. And filled *another* LP with his New York neuroses. He's taken four years to do what these guys woulda knocked off on their coffee break.

SD: Maybe you need to listen to *Listen Without Prejudice*.

JB: This is the musical equivalent of Woody Allen flying a crew to Rio and filming Mia Farrow as she pops antihistamines in the Holiday Inn, with carnival sounds faintly audible over the A.C.

SD: You know, Dylan's like the Woodman too, in a way—

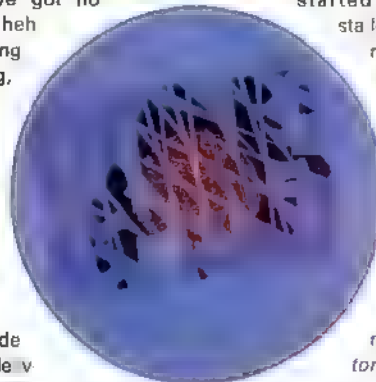
JB: Similar themes and obsessions?

SD: No—I prefer his earlier, funnier stuff. This time, with *Under the Red Sky*, he's followed in the footsteps of Elton and Iggy—Kate and Cindy—checking into the Don Was Hormone Replacement Center.

JB: Smart move—when Was jump-started Bonnie Raitt's

stalled Edsel of a career, it was the rock equivalent of *Cocoon Three: The*

# Pl a t e r D u J o u r



"Praying for Time."

SD: Hmmm. A fin de siècle sermon delivered at an audacious 68 BPM.

JB: Beats per minute?

SD: *Beatles* per minute. He's reaching, alright—to the back of the record stack: Lennon, Elton, Wonder; they're all here. . . .

JB: Gaye, too.

SD: Nothing's ever been proved. Sure, I'm impressed by his ecological recycling of ideas, but if he's so righteous, why doesn't he do something about the problem on his own doorstep?

JB: You mean the homeless and the unemployed?

SD: You know it.

JB: He sang backup on Andrew Ridgeley's album. What do you want—blood?

SD: Paul Simon was also part of a duo with an unequal distribution of looks and talent, health and wealth.

JB: I *still* don't know how they could let Meryl Streep play her in the movie.

SD: I see you're initially baffled by Simon's latest venture, *The Rhythm of the Saints*—bame it on the bossa nova. A risk, but I say Rio-bravo! This album is me I am this album

JB: Ah, yes, he's traveled to another continent, absorbed the culture, min-

*Final Remix*

SD: Bob Seger's next—*Re-Animator Two*, anyone? Listen to the list of heavy

friends Don's enlisted as session men or, should the

need arise, pallbearers: Slash, etc.

JB: It's unbelievable

SD: No, "It's Unbelievable" is Dylan's next track. Check out the video—Molly Ringwald's never looked so good. Just like a woman!

JB: Which reminds me—these tunes sound *awfully* familiar.

SD: Of course. That's the point. The Zim's thumbing his back pages, revisiting "Highway 61 Revisited." Finally he's learning to give the public what they want.

JB: Repr oldies. We doctors refer to this as *Steel Wheels* syndrome.

SD: Try to *Listen Without Prejudice*, though. It might take rather less than a quarter century before George Michael runs dry and looks to reupholster "Monkey."

JB: Where do you get off predicting the artistic demise of the sage of the age, one of the few real artists left in rock music. How can you justify such slurs?

SD: Maybe you should *Listen Without Prejudice, Vol. 2*

Jonathan Bernstein  
and Steven Daly







## PYLON

Chain  
Sky

**P**ylon is like the Boston of the alternative-music scene. Well, maybe not, but both groups waited almost eight years between their second and third albums, and both were widely remembered and revered long after they temporarily threw in the towel. Sometime during the long vacation Pylon wisely shed their new-wave art school skin and came together as a band. The new album is rooted in the same rhythmic disjunctions and danceable repetitions that made the quartet seminal staples of Athens, Georgia's early-'80s music heyday, but *Chain* isn't as overtly quirky and jerky as their early *Gyrates* and *Chomp*. The instruments blend together in a manner that recalls Pylon's most successful earlier works like "Beep," which, rather than little



the Buds' 1988 debut, *Pop Said* . . . That's all well and good, but the bottom line is that this group sound like they have the same emotional agenda as Joseph Goebbels: to make you feel absolutely *nothing at all*. Another generation discovers the power of humorless irony. What a concept.

David Menconi

## THE CAVEDOGS

Joy Rides for Shut-Ins  
Enigma

**L**ike hail hitting hard and heavy during a summer rainstorm, the Cavedogs cut through the meaningless transparent drivel that characterizes most guitar bands these days. This crisp and fresh trio don't do anything glaringly different; there's no gimmick. They achieve just the right balance of sound—hard edged but melodic, with no sloshing keyboards draining the substance; no pretensions; no saccharine loverboy shit.



bits of art, were more importantly *songs*.

Perhaps Pylon took a cue from R.E.M., who transformed *Chomp's* "Crazy" from a great song into an incredible song. Like the R.E.M. remake, *Chain's* songs flow, not like water, but like mercury—smooth, thick, and consistent.

Mark Blackwell

## THE DARLING BUDS

Crawdaddy  
Columbia

**I**t makes perfect sense that the Darling Buds' arch flower-power pop is all the rage in fad-conscious England. Yes, this Welsh group sound awful lot like early Blondie (or current Primitives), with all the requisite cute touches: ditzy vocals from singer Andrea, buzzsaw guitars, kitschy '60s fashions, etc.

Listenable? Sure. Thanks to producer Stephen Street (Morrissey, the Smiths), *Crawdaddy* is more polished, well-crafted and catchy than



With the help of producer Ed Stasium, the Cavedogs have a career-making record here, the kind Soul Asylum might make if they started recording after they'd stayed up all night. They build on John Lennon, sometimes sound like Neil Young on speed, steal the good shit from R.E.M., and all in all make me recall some of the good things about '70s rock. They level with us on "La La La," singing, "We're just three white rich kids bitching 'bout the world / We

think we got problems, but we ain't got problems." A breath of fresh air.

**Robert Gordon**

## YOUSSOU N'DOUR

**Set**  
**Virgin**

**S**et may be Youssou N'Dour's best effort at linking the traditionalist and populist leanings of Afropop, mostly because there seems to be so little strain. Where last year's *The Lion* smacked of Peter Dinklage's well-meant musical imperialism, *Set* pours a more diverse group of influences into the tumbler and shakes it well.

What holds *Set* together is the same thing that brought Youssou N'Dour to the world's attention in the first place—his stunning, expressive,



and passionate voice. It rightly continues to be the focal point of his music. This flexible instrument soars and growls, grabbing listeners even though they don't understand what it says.

It's doubtful that N'Dour will become as popular as George Michael. Audiences are just not that cosmopolitan. But he has more talent in his thumbnail than most contemporary pop stars have in their entire being.

**Hank Bordowitz**

## ALICE IN CHAINS

**Facelift**  
**Columbia**

**A**lice in Chains love their hometown. While other Seattle metal bands, such as Soundgarden and Queensrÿche, transcend their rain-drenched surroundings through sheer force of intellectual energy and free-floating anger, Alice in Chains give in to their depression. They are metal's answer to Joy Division—gloously, unabashedly bummed out.

Sonically, they're yet another '70s-inspired band. But like their brethren in the dark/melodic school of metal—Danzig and Trouble—their striking songwriting prevents them from coming off as just another retro act.



Or just another "cool Seattle band," though being in the right trendy place at the right time surely helped them get signed. Though "Love/Hate, Love"'s grandiose, ominous wails rip off Led Zep's "Kashmir," overall, Alice in Chains are on their way to finding a sound of their own: a bit of Sabbath y grunge here, the Cult's psychedelic big guitar there, and Slayer's army-of-death assaultiveness mixed with the Cure's black depths of despair, circa *Pornography*. At the debut-album stage of the game, that mood's their most notable feature. Ranging from sulen to disgusted to despondent, it's undeniably real and affecting. Just the thing for a rainy day.

**Daina Darzin**

## JOE HENRY

**Shuffletown**  
**A&M**

**O**n his third album, Joe Henry really changes gears. His last album (*Murder of Crows*) was a guitar-rock, country-tinged outing that featured guitarist Mick Taylor, bassist Tim Drummond, keyboardist Chuck Leavell, and drummer/producer Anton Fier. *Shuffletown* is not quite such an all-star showcase, instead emphasizing Henry's songs within a very sparse, acoustic musical setting. Produced by T-Bone Burnett and recorded live in the studio in four days this past spring, the release again proves Henry to be a fine songwriter—he's almost as cutting a chronicler of the war in the bedroom as is Elvis Costello.

Musically, the entire effort has a melancholy, sometimes sentimental feel, with tinkling piano melodies and touches of country, jazz, and folk. The arrangements converge around

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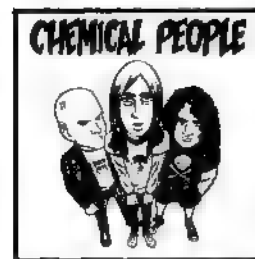
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# 10,000 MANIACS

## HOPE CHEST



In 1982 and 1983, before signing with Elektra, 10,000 Maniacs released two self-financed and immediately hard-to-get albums, *Human Conflict Number Five* and *Secrets of the I Ching*. The fourteen tracks on *Hope Chest*, newly remixed and remastered, are culled from these formative sessions.

### TIME CAPSULE 1982-1990

This first long-form home video from 10,000 Maniacs is a synopsis of the band's career so far. Singer-turned-director Natalie Merchant has assembled material from various sources including early home movies and rare performance footage. Also included are seven of the band's inspired music videos: "Scorpio Rising," "Don't Talk," "Like the Weather," "What's the Matter Here," "Trouble Me," "Eat For Two" and "You Happy Puppet."

On Elektra Cassettes, Compact Discs and Videos

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acoustic instrumentation—mostly acoustic guitars, mandolin, and violin. "Make the World Go Away," the



only cover here, proves compatible with Henry's own lyrical sentiments. Henry was obviously influenced in recording this subtle, sparse release by producer Burnette, who has recorded artists this way in the past, always with—as here—successful results.

Steve Matteo

### DEVO

*smoothnoodlemaps*  
Enigma

Why are Devo so damn nice now? Dehumanization plus instant gratification used to yield caustic hooks plus spattering spazz guitar for the Akron spudboys. On *smoothnoodlemaps*, Devo lobby for environmental concern and positive vibes, dude, and most of the riffage is straightforward, synth-squiggly dance pop with some devoluted house-music touches. One foot in 1984, one in your local MTV affiliate—that's maturity?

Devo wills to rock for the finale: "Dawghaus," "Devo Has Feelings Too" and the mean-spirited "Jim-

my," a polyrhythmic field holler about a corporate creep whose karma catches up and sentences him to a wheelchair. Altogether, *smoothnoodle* is more innocuous than bad—"Post Post-Modern Man" is their best single recently, even if it is folk music—but I had hoped the '90s would cause different mutations in this potato patch.

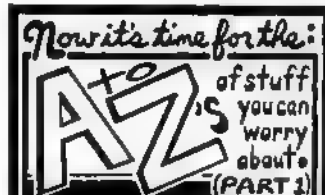
Tom Nardella

### THE REPLACEMENTS

*All Shook Down*  
Reprise

Largely shying away from the sloppy (post)punk guitar of early albums, the Replacements' new one, *All Shook Down*, is replete with 12 string guitars, keyboards, occasional horns, John Cale's viola, and even, I think, a recorder. The implication of this and the plethora of guest musicians playing these parts is that the Replacements have been completely subordinated to Paul Westerberg as singer/songwriter. More significant, more detrimental, is the change in Westerberg's vocals. Attempting to add what in operatically inclined circles might be termed "vocal color," he has taken to whispering through many of his songs sotto voce. Although this works for the somnambulist title tune, it ruins "Someone Take the Wheel," which might otherwise have become a fine angst-driven addition to the 'Mats repertoire. Westerberg is simply a better screamer than a stylist; the closest he gets to old-fashioned yelling is on "Bent All Out of Shape" (not surprisingly, the only track recorded

### Little Suttys Quest For Music by Mark Blackwell



in hometown Minneapolis) and "My Little Problem," his metallic duet with Concrete Blonde's Johnette Napolitano, who still overpowers and out-sexes him.

A few years ago, the Replacements first toyed with strings, horns, and Alex Chilton guitar fills. Still closer to the bored, scared postadolescents of their first albums, on the cusp of meager fame, they were afraid that the world wouldn't accept them: These songs had as much to do with rock'n' roll as any of their early hardcore stylings. Now accepted, weary adults, they are in danger of complacency, of losing their obsessions—the very fear that first drove them and their music.

Andrew Jaffe

## LIMBOMANIACS

*Stinky Grooves*  
Relativity/Combat

With all the hoopla about subliminals buried within the grooves, it's refreshing to hear a band who lay all their dirty intentions on the line. These Maniacs (Butt House on vocals, Brain on drums, Mirv on guitars, and Pete on everything else) are downright nasty. They know how to rock the house from the get go.

Proof is in the opening track, "Butt Funkin'," with strutmeister Bootsy Collins guesting. If you don't immediately get up and move, you might just be dead. With the help of some other luminaries—Trouble Funk percussion man T-Bone on "Shake It" and James Brown sax dude Maceo Parker on a few tracks, most notably "Free-

style," Limbomaniacs produce one great party album.

After you're tired and sweaty from dancing, listen to the lyrics (yowza!)—all parts of the anatomy are covered on this disc. Using tons of sound bites and all manner of innuendo, the Limbomaniacs get off on being filthy and watching people blush. Warning: If you play *Stinky Grooves* on your Walkman, loudly, you may find people looking at you strangely. But it's worth it.

Lauren Spencer

## LOS LOBOS

*The Neighborhood*  
Slash/Warner Bros.

Containing equal measures of the salty and the sweet, *The Neighborhood* captures both faces of Los Lobos: masters of greasy rock'n' roll, beloved at disreputable venues and sensitive balladeers who cherish friends and family. Problem is, the raunchy stuff delivers such a charge



that the gentler moments, however heartfelt, end up being an annoying distraction.

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**loose**

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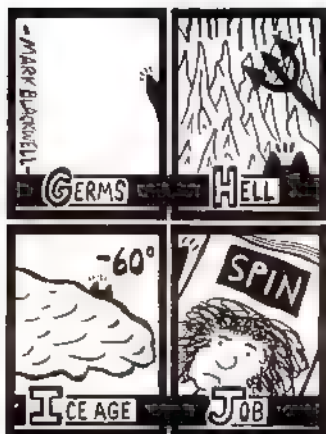
**come together**

One of the most talked-about bands in Britain brings its joyously loose and funky sound to the U.S. Three versions of their top 20 U.K. hit "Loaded" are almost enough, and that's how many are on this seven song E.P., plus two mixes of the current smash "Come Together."

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# BROTHERS

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to imagine, unleashing a thrilling throwback to hard-boiled Chicago blues on "I Walk Alone." A vicious barrage of cat-scratch guitar, tough vocals, and gut-thumping percussion, this atomic rave-up could be the Yardbirds plundering the Chess vaults, only with more finesse. Among the boogie delights, the urban soul lament "I Can't Understand" boasts certified legend Willie Dixon as cowriter (with the group's Cesar Rosas). Nothing finer to these ears, for sure.

If it seems loutish to dismiss the gentler songs, too bad. But *The Neighborhood* doesn't always amount to a case of either/or. Searing guitar adds anguish to the lilting "Emily," and the title track dramatizes workaday vignettes with a beefy, funky rhythm. The ability to blend diverging impulses may suggest sophistication, but I'd prefer it if Los Lobos simply rocked hard 'round the clock.

Jon Young

## MEGADETH

*Rust in Peace*  
Capitol

At his best, Dave Mustaine is virtually the only speed-metal operator whose music always swings, always stings, and always goes somewhere. He likes to write about moral corruption involving technology and/or violence, and his guitar playing resembles a white-water rafting trip with Michael Schenker and Charlie Parker. But Mustaine's personnel purges have limited Megadeth's development, and his battle with booze and other substances hasn't helped. M'deth's last recorded work was a spectacularly limp cover of Alice Cooper's "No More Mr. Nice Guy," and frankly, their future looked questionable.

False alarm. *Rust in Peace* is a mature, complex, surprisingly consonant, sparsely produced album, introducing drummer Nick Menza and guitarist Marty Friedman, a neo-classical fret fryer formerly with Cacophony. For the first time, Megadeth sound like a unified whole, not just guys working for Mustaine. Lyrically, Dave is starting to examine his own head—"Poison Is the Cure" and "Tornado of Souls" seem to address drug abuse; "Lucretia" is about craving isolation. Extra points for the mouth-noise solo on "Dawn Patrol." Simply put, *Rust* never sleeps.

Tom Nordlie

## COCTEAU TWINS

*Heaven or Las Vegas*  
4AD/Capitol

If the Cocteau Twins have been making more or less the same record for the past five years, at least they're getting better at it. They're even starting to sound (gaspl) almost mainstream—*Heaven or Las Vegas* actually has honest-to-God hooks lurking within its atmospheric murk.

In some ways, this represents a major rethinking for the Twins, who customarily throw up walls of sonic fog so dense it's almost impossible to decipher individual components. But here, the haze parts enough for Elizabeth Fraser's distant, ethereal voice to be heard (if still not understood) clearly, and Simon Raymonde's droning bass lines also get a bigger chunk of the sound.



Best to sit back and let the Twins' pleasant sound effects envelop you, because the pleasures *Heaven or Las Vegas* has to offer aren't the sort you should spend any time thinking about. The Cocteau Twins are proof that you don't necessarily need something to say to get by; something to feel will do just fine.

David Manconi

## THE MEKONS

*F.U.N. 90*  
A&M

The Mekons are rock's oldest, sagest, and merriest intentional community, maybe because they have great taste in ghosts. On their new EP, *F.U.N. 90*, they croon Hank Williams' "Ramblin' Man" to introduce "One Horse Town," and give the songwriting credit to Lester Bangs. But the fieriest ghost here is rock itself. On last year's *The Mekons Rock'n'Roll*, John Langford and Sally Timms screamed about going through the Berlin wall trying to get away from the ghost of rock'n'roll. Well, it's 1990, the wall's down—being packaged and sold to Ameri-

cans—and not only did Johnny Rotten (nor his I Hate Pink Floyd T-shirt) have nothing to do with it, but it's Pink Floyd who are giggling on the rubble. The Mekons don't understand this bit at all—even the edge of the world has a UPC symbol on it.



So if *Rock'n'Roll* was a batch of songs, *F.U.N. 90* is a batch of persuasion environments—densely mixed guitar squalls, fresh beats, spooky piano, and tape effects. The eeriest track is "Sheffield Park." The words are from ancient Irish ballads like "The Butcher Boy" and "The Gentleman Soldier," but for aging British punks, dreary Sheffield is where you go to hide until Thatcher dies—think of Joe Strummer's "This Is England," or the Mekons' own "Hard to Be Human Again." The beat jerks under a

jingling piano loop, and Tom Greenhalgh's screech sounds resigned but pissed. You can hear that the Mekons have come a long way since 1978, from the death trip to tribe vibes, from "Never Been in a Riot" to a fight worth winning. *F.U.N. 90* isn't a holiday in the sun—it's hard-ass rock'n'roll for mean times.

Robert Sheffield

## REDD KROSS

*Third Eye*  
Atlantic

There isn't much to distinguish *Third Eye*, Redd Kross' first LP since *Neurotica* gave them a substantial forum for their '70s Kiss/Linda Blair/Bay City Rollers/Partridge Family showcase. What with New Kids successfully updating the teen-hype machine in the interim, the Kross' hippy-drippy—no longer gut-level—nostalgia sounds old and pained. And if anything, this stuff's supposed to grab listeners with candied pleasures and sugar-coated dreams. When the band yearns for the days of "1976" and cruises in a Trans-Am T-top car on "Elephant Flares," it does two things: It realizes the self-pity be-

hind all nostalgia, and it sounds ludicrous, as if 8-track players and angel dust held more allure than CDs and cocaine.

When they go for straight corny, the record clicks. "Bubblegum Factory," with its Rollerresque backups,



pulls off no less than what the title implies, and for a few minutes you may find yourself tapping your toes along.

Otherwise: too many compromises; too many false equations. The Partridge Family do not equal the Stooges, or Kiss, no matter who's giving the history lesson. When you put two extremes—punch and pop—together, you water down their very essences. Would you want ice cream on your steak? Some ideas remain bad ideas.

Rob O'Connor

## PRIMAL SCREAM

*Come Together*  
Sire/Warner Bros.

## MY BLOODY VALENTINE

*Glider*  
Sire/Warner Bros.

## RIDE

*Smile*  
Sire/Repnse

Primal Scream's steam is anchored in a '60s petunia patch somewhere between the graves of T. Rex and the Velvet Underground—far away from the Beatles. As Bobby Gillespie's guileless vocals bid, cheekily, "I'm free, you're free—touch me" in "Come Together," folk riffs and a hearty gospel chorus muzzle electronic samples. The fact that Gillespie toured with Jesus and Mary Chain is evident in the rowdy "Rambler Rose," complete with guillotine feedback. Since their debut (*Sonic Flower Groove* in '84), Primal Scream have kept busy, bruising pop with moody punk in the Stooges' spirit.

Where Primal Scream curb feedback, My Bloody Valentine pitch themselves into it. In the infectious

the darling buds



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On Atlantic Records, Cassettes and Compact Discs

David Lombard Management

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"Soon," these Dubliners bury a sprightly OMD-ish synth loop in a mess of layered noise. The vocals are shrouded behind the mess, creating an incredibly tantalizing feeling. My Bloody Valentine are the crimson you see and the pure sound you hear when you look at the sun with your eyes clenched.

When Ride's lead singer, Mark Gardner, sings "The sun's in my eyes and I feel so weird today," in "Close My Eyes," it sounds like he's too sleepy to even blink. On their U.S. debut EP, this British quartet staple pretty, misty vocals onto a solid wall of throbbing hardcore bass and drums on visceral tracks such as "Chelsea Girl" and "Drive Blind."

**Bhargavi C. Mandava**

## ZZ TOP

**Recycler**

Warner Bros.

**T**hough they don't often get credit, ZZ Top were one of the few big '70s rock acts to successfully reinvent (not just rehabilitate) their sound for an '80s audience. Nothing could have prepared listeners for the pulsing synths and sequencers that turned *Eliminator* into 1983's most surprising dance-floor smash. That li'l ol' band from Texas brought da blues into the Nautilus age, and four years later, perhaps still weary from effort, ZZ made a follow-up album, *Afterburner*, which was as close to formula as they've come.

The grace of their new record, *Recycler*, is that, as the name implies, it finds Messrs. Gibbons, Hill, and Beard drawing more on the sweat-soaked tactics of their pre-digital days. They're patching together a recombinant ZZ Top sound for the '90s. Agreed, a few of the numbers, like "Penthouse Eyes" and "Decision or Collision," are redundant. But a huge fraction of ZZ Top's Kool Kwotient is in their delivery—the sooty groan of Billy Gibbons' and Dusty Hill's voices, the snaky, shuffling beats—so you can almost ignore content. As usual, the most intriguing, genre-defying moments come when the band slow down ("2000 Blues"), get randy ("Burger Man," chock-full of beefy innuendoes), or get delirious. "My Head's in Mississippi," a "La Grange"-style romp, finds the desert shamans "Stumblin' through the parking lot of an invisible 7-Eleven." There just ain't much mo' to say after that.

**Tom Nordlie**

# BLUE LIGHT SPECIAL



## Jimmy Yancey

BY SPENCER HARRINGTON

**T**HE SCHEDULED DEMOLITION of Chicago's Comiskey Park will wipe out a lesser-known landmark of jazz history. Jimmy "Papa" Yancey was a groundskeeper there for 26 years, grooming the White Sox diamond in the days of Zeke Bonura and Baseball Hall of Fame shortstop Luke Appling. At the time of his death in 1951, *Down Beat* wrote that Yancey's three loves were his wife, the White Sox, and his piano. He was, in fact, the greatest blues pianist that ever lived and the progenitor of boogie-woogie. While his disciples went on to popularize his art, Yancey recorded only 56 sides and died in relative obscurity.

In 1986 Yancey was inducted into the Rock'n'Roll Hall of Fame, acknowledging him as one of the music's forefathers, the man who "gave rock its roll." This is an unlikely honor for a man who was, by and large, a quiet, reflective player best known for his slow blues. Even Yancey's up-tempo numbers, like his classic "Yancey Special," don't reveal the furious, pounding bass that characterized the genre. Instead, he often played bass lines inspired by tango rhythms. Yancey swung lightly, but he never rocked; his music wasn't really suitable for dancing, and in this respect he differed from many other boogie players who came before and after.

A good sampling of Yancey's music, *Jimmy Yancey: In the Beginning*, has just become available on CD from the Solo Art label (SA-CD1), the first record company to "discover" him in 1939. Yancey is zestier here than on his later recordings; his playing is faster, even exuberant. This release is an important addition to the almost nonexistent body of Yancey material

now on CD. Atlantic has preserved four cuts from Yancey's sensational last session on the CD compilation *Atlantic Blues: Piano* (81694-4). This session, supervised by Ahmet Ertegun in 1951, has been reissued at least a half-dozen times since then and is ripe for conversion to CD.

Yancey's career is hard to envision in an age of high-profile artists who regularly fill sports arenas. A small, stooped, shy man, Yancey chose a settled life on Chicago's South Side over a more footloose career as a musician. Although he sometimes played professionally, he was never more than an amateur who just happened to be exceptionally gifted. He was born in Chicago in 1894 to a family of vaudeville players. At six he was singing and tap dancing in a vaudeville troupe, and in 1912 joined a touring company that performed in front of George V and the royal family at Buckingham Palace. A year later Yancey quit show business to play baseball for a Negro-league team before settling into his job as a groundskeeper in 1925. When both Meade "Lux" Lewis and the Bob Crosby Big Band made a hit out of "Yancey Special" in 1938, record companies came looking for Yancey and found him trimming the grass at Corniskey. He

eventually recorded several times and performed at Carnegie Hall in New York in 1948.

Yancey's playing is slow and uncomplicated. Jazz critics like to call him a "primitive," but the term is only appropriate in the sense that he was self-taught, never learned to read music, and never admitted to any outside influences. His individualism expresses itself in his playing.

The Solo Art release has several flavors of Yancey for your delectation: "Big Bear Train" has a jivey melody; "Two o'Clock Blues" is slower, more contemplative Yancey; "Lucille's Lament" is about as baroque as his playing gets. The four cuts on the Atlantic blues-piano compilation are also not to be missed. "Yancey Special" is included here, as is "Mournful Blues," which showcases the melancholy that became his tag line.

Thrilling jazz pianists have come and gone, racing up and down the keyboard, and improvising on their improvisations. But there have been very few who have approached Yancey's depth of feeling. As he always said, "Nobody plays quite like me." Jimmy Yancey had mastered the most difficult technique of all; simple, slow, soulful playing.



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# U.K. Indie Dance

BY TONY FLETCHER

The year 1990 has been one of re-evaluation and subsequent rejuvenation for bands in Britain. Spurred on by the excitement of 1988's acid-house scene and 1989's raves (large all-night dance parties held in warehouses or fields), as well as the genuine creative potential of merging rock songs with a dance beat, groups that would once rather have given away their drum kits than step inside a nightclub have been queuing up for their shot at a crossover club hit. Indie rock is out; indie dance is in.

Opinions clash on who truly understands the concept and who is merely jumping on a bandwagon, but there can be little doubt as to where indie dance first took root: Manchester, home of Happy Mondays and the Stone Roses.

## In 1990, the notion of taking sides between "rock" and "dance" went out the window.

The Roses always maintained a traditional rock discipline to their music, but the Mondays were manic clubgoers whose dance-floor sensibility was often lost in their records' wanton chaos. That changed when Paul Oakenfold, a London DJ at the center of Britain's acid house explosion, remixed the Mondays' "Wrote for Luck" in 1989, turning it from a psychotic barrage of sound into a skeletal, pounding club track that enjoyed instant popularity on the dance floor. When the Stone Roses then stormed the Top Ten with the ingratiating funk of "Fool's Gold," the notion of taking sides between "rock" and "dance" went out the window.

In London, groups once perceived as hardened rock acts were also moving into dance music. Jon Marsh of the Beloved returned from an American sojourn in late 1987 with a suitcase full of house, "techno," and hip hop records that he and partner Steve Waddington then tried to assimilate into their music, splitting their old band in the process. Meanwhile, the core of the Shamen, who had already

started experimenting with hip hop beats that bordered on the industrial, moved from Scotland to London just in time to catch the acid-house summer of '88.

Both groups openly embraced the new technology that fueled the dance floor, but being pioneers wasn't necessarily an advantage. When the new-look Beloved put out a track in '87 called "Forever Dancing," it was, according to Marsh, "universally panned." As a result, the group distributed music anonymously until support for their sounds outweighed prejudice against their name, by the fall of '89 their single, "The Sun Rising," had become a rave anthem. "Now I think we're perceived as being quite innovative," says Marsh with a wry self-satisfaction.

Having been immersed in the club culture for three years now, the two

duos note how few bands were in the dance clubs before the scene reached its saturation point in the summer of 1989, a claim that combines understandable self-defense with an air of elitism.

It is an elitism that Primal Scream—once viewed as an archetypal indie band (all abrasive guitars and '60s attitudes)—take offense with. While making an album in 1989, Primal Scream began attending dance clubs where they were quickly converted to the hypnotic house beat. "We're really big rock fans," says the band's guiding force Bobby Gillespie, "but we felt there was nobody who was vital anymore."

Forming a friendship with London DJ Andy Weatherall, Primal Scream asked him to reassemble the end portion of an album track, "I'm Losing More Than I'll Ever Have." The result was a pulsating seven-minute instrumental groove called "Loaded" that bore no relation to the track it was drawn from. But as one of the best British dance records of 1990, it was an instant chart hit that turned Primal Scream into pop stars

and brought them many an enemy in club land.

Norman Cook of Beats International, for example, observed that Creation, Primal Scream's label, should have sacked Primal Scream and signed Andy Weatherall instead, cutting out the middlemen. Gillespie takes exception to this, insisting, "The melody is our melody, and the instruments are our instruments. To us it's a great record, and you do whatever it takes to make a great record."

But Cook, who is frequently asked to remix rock records for the dance floor, insists that many groups have their priorities wrong. "A lot of indie bands who know nothing about dance music," he says, "get the idea that any track can be turned into a dance record, that all you have to do is give it to the right person."

Since Primal Scream's success, the clamor to get a bit of the indie-

dance action has become deafening. The Soup Dragons, who three years ago were making Buzzcocks-influenced pop-punk songs, emerged in 1990 with the biggest indie dance record of the year—a club-based cover of the Rolling Stones song, "I'm Free." And the Wonder Stuff, who in 1989 asked, "Who the hell will be the disco king?" answered themselves by issuing a club remix of their latest single, "Circlesquare."

The changing scene has also helped those groups who already used drum machines and samplers: Pop Will Eat Itself and Jesus Jones enjoyed overdue chart success merely by swapping their latent aggression for relaxed club grooves, while the Farm—Liverpool's version of Happy Mondays—took the whole concept to a logical conclusion by covering the Monkees' "(I'm Not Your) Steppin' Stone" over the rhythm track of Snap's "The Power."

As might be expected, the rise of indie dance has radically altered the nature of live shows in the U.K. For example, the Shamen now have their own traveling road show, Synergy, whose DJ incorporates live mixing (with sequencers and computers) and sound-system tracks supplied by the Shamen purely for club use. The group themselves only perform for two or three songs at a time, to create "less emphasis on the appearance of the band," and more on the overall experience.

A new generation of British youth, uninformed in their colorful hooded tops, baggy trousers, floppy fringe haircuts, and Timberland boots, have grown up preferring raves and drugs to concert tickets and beer. But now that the British government has clamped down on outdoor raves and the club movement is looking for a new direction, those bands who can successfully organize live shows and take them into the clubs have the best chances of success.

In fact, the artists involved in indie dance wonder if it's a strong enough vehicle to carry everyone who wants to clamber on board. For now, at least, a beat-hungry public can't get enough of it. "What you've got to remember," says the Beloved's Jon Marsh, "is that most people who buy records couldn't give a shit who made them."



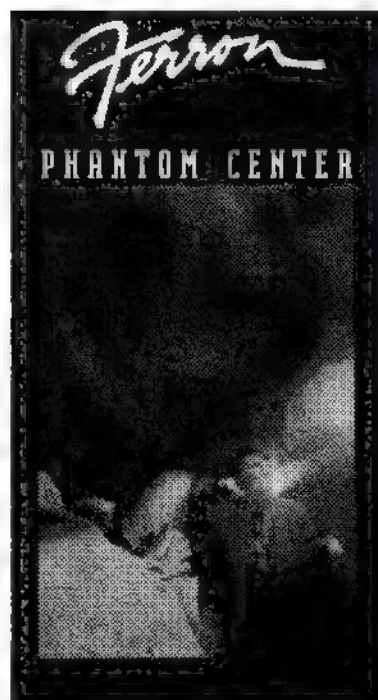
### TONY FLETCHER'S 1990 TOP FIVE SINGLES

1. Deee-Lite, "Groove Is in the Heart/What Is Love" (Elektra)
2. Happy Mondays, "Step On" (Elektra)
3. Snap, "The Power" (Arista)
4. Black Box, "Everybody, Everybody" (RCA)
5. Candy Flip, "Strawberry Fields Forever" (Atlantic)

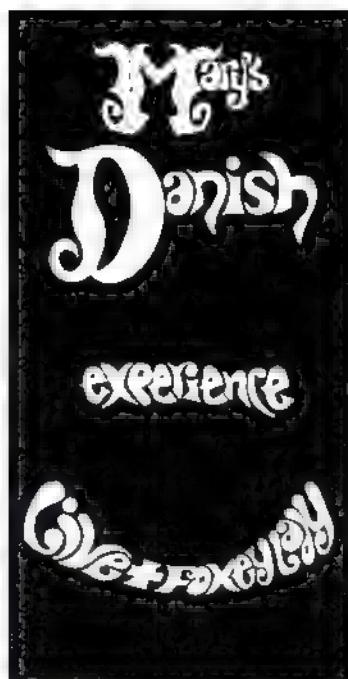
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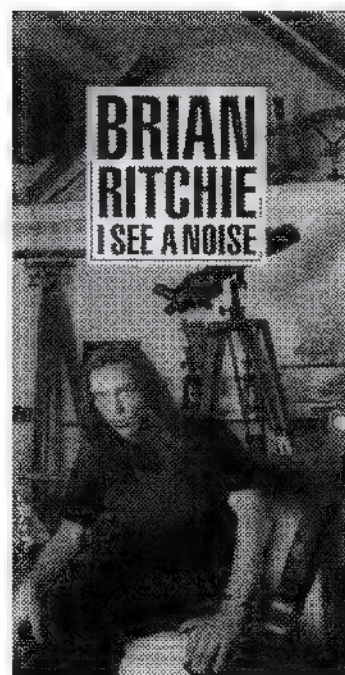
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BY RICHARD GEHR

**W**HEN I LIVED in Los Angeles during the dark ages, my pal Matt and I would make weekly runs to the Palfair Theater, which screened mainly Indian movies. We never actually sat through a film. Instead, we'd order take-out curry next door, drop 10 or 20 dollars on 2-buck cassettes of Indian film music, and on the way home jack them into the car stereo for a few minutes each—just long enough to laugh ourselves silly over the weird juxtapositions of stiff Eurodisco thuds and cheap electronics with quasiclassical sitars, tablas, and chirpy voices. Speed-consuming *filmi*, as the style is known, was our idea of a big night out.

*Filmi* was addictive, but we didn't care. After all, we figured, could 900 million Indians be wrong? The Bombay film industry releases nearly a thousand movies a year, each of which contains half a dozen musical numbers. These production numbers—often resembling slapdash Busby Berkeley extravaganzas, or romantic duets flaunting the laws of time and space—are nearly always recorded by "playback singers," studio musicians whose sound is rendered on-screen by lip-synching actors. (As Chairman Madonna put it: "Let's do something *really* nasty. Let's lip-synch!") Hindus are hep to the illusory nature of existence anyway, and are drawn to the cinema primarily because of the musical directors and voices behind the screen—an elite clique cranking out pop music at McDonald's velocity. Lata Mangeshkar, in fact, pops up in the *Guinness Book of World Records* as the planet's most-recorded singer.

For years, Lata monopolized the female playback scene along with Asha Bhosle, Lata's sister and India's

"queen of bebop." Like their Hollywood counterparts, South Asian film producers tend to play it safe, which in this case means using the most popular singers and composers over and over. It's a grueling, labor-intensive industry, but each song usually contains at least the glimmer of an interesting idea, or at least a novel kink on an old standby. Considering the speed at which they're composed and recorded, their diversity is startling. You can hear the breadth of classical Indian film music, from sacred to sappy, on *Golden Voices From the Silver Screen*, a three-volume CD series released recently on GlobeStyle.

*Golden Voices* shows how *filmi* transcended the conventions, if not the repressive morals, of Indian classical music. Tablas and sitars were first perverted to the pop cause during the pre-Strawberry Alarm Clock '50s. (Tablas bubble and gurgle giddily underneath otherwise stiff and innocuous tunes, lending flexibility and polyrhythmic inventiveness to what would

otherwise bore listeners to tears—something Western pop could take a lesson from.) During the '60s, *filmi* composers copped scads of ersatz rock riffs and arrangements from Hollywood composers such as John Barry and Henry Mancini, and eccentric spaghetti-western genius Ennio Morricone.

A female *filmi* vocalist, like a Hindu goddess, must contain multitudes. Alternately teasing, seductive, and morally admonishing, Asha, Lata, Geeta Dutt, and others supply vocal moods to match any unlikely mixture of styles. In "Aaj Ke Raat" ("Tonight Is the Night"), an actress's

back and forth between polka accordions, Dixieland jazz, and giddy cartoon music.

Disco busted big booty in India during the '70s and never left. Electronic drums replaced gurgling tablas, while a vast array of ridiculous video-game sound effects disguise the beat's "Stayin' Alive" monotony. As tough studs increasingly populate Indian cinema, mutant Indian disco has transformed vocalists into acid-head John Travoltas. Kishore Kumar challenges Michael Jackson to a moon-walk contest on the memorable "I Am John D'Mellow," from the fine *Disco*

## Filmi and Najma

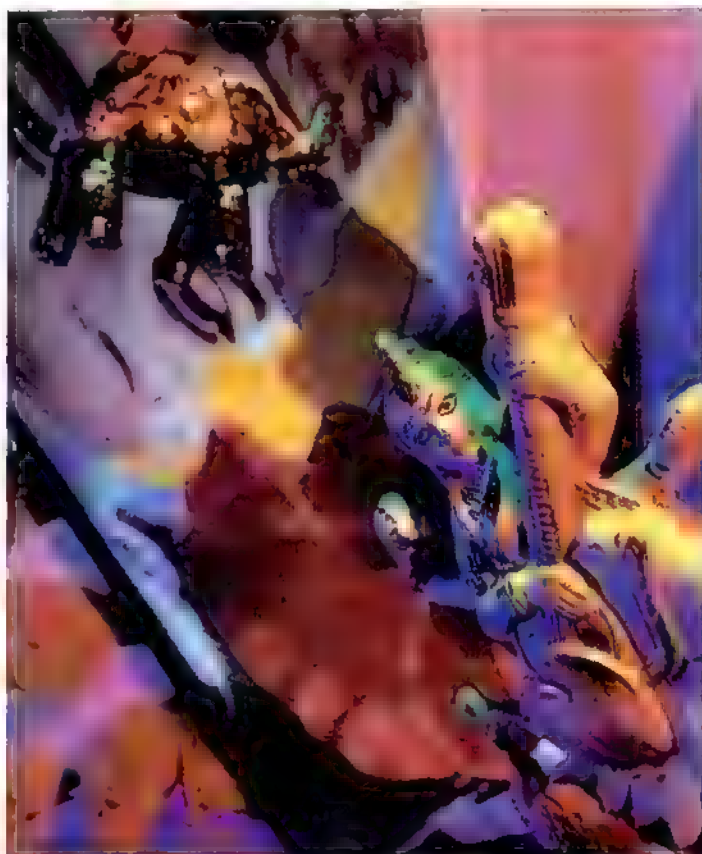
orgasmic moans set the stage for an echoey Bhosle masterpiece orchestrated with shimmering guitars and cheesy organ riffs. And not just the women. In "O Megha Re Bhole" ("Tell Us Dear Wave"), manly Mohammed Rafi navigates a fragmented arrangement that skids

'89 compilation (Venus import), while Bappi Lahiri proclaims himself "Super Dancer" on *Super Disco Hits, Vol. 2* (Super Cassettes Industries import). Kumar responds modestly with "I Am the Best," and the (super)beat goes on.

BESIDES FILM MUSIC, light-classical *ghazals* appeal most to India's pop audience. In London, the fetching Najma has fused these improvised poetic couplets (sung in Urdu) with slinky funk jazz lines. The result—on her second disc, *Atish* (Shanachie)—is pretty terrific, if slightly crystal damaged. Fretless bass, guitars, and saxophone lend sinuous and hypnotically modern oomph to this centuries-old form organized around a harmonium and tabla. It's much livelier than the stiff and strange orchestral collaboration between Ravi Shankar and Philip Glass on *Passages* (Private Music). Some glorious mystical shit ought to have sprung from this meeting of East and West. Unfortunately, West beat East, and I'm not holding my breath for the secret jam-session outtakes.

### RICHARD GEHR'S 1990 WORLD BEAT TOP FIVE

1. Euis Komariah Yus Wiradiredja, *The Sound of Sunda* (GlobeStyle)
2. Simon Shaheen, *The Music of Mohamed Abdel Wahab* (Axiom/Mango)
3. Aster Aweke, *Aster* (Columbia)
4. Cumbia, *Cumbia* (Stern's USA)
5. Baaba Maal, *Taara* (Syllart)



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## Sinéad O'Connor

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"That's right Eddie, go ahead and pick a fight with me!"

"I'm not picking a fight, Mom. I'm glad you like her again, but I don't care for censorship in any form. I don't think she should've boycotted Andrew. I don't think it's a good idea for one artist to boycott another because they don't like what the other has to say. I think it's dangerous."

"I don't know why I even bother talking to you. You damn kids always loved torturing me." Click.

Thus time it was my mom's turn to hang up on me. But I was pissed that Sinéad didn't think her fans had enough smarts to figure Andrew Dice Clay for themselves. Plus it seemed hypocritical—she had after all appeared on the Grammys with the black and yellow Public Enemy symbol drawn on the side of her head, and then on the MTV Music Awards with 2 Live Crew. It made me wonder if she thought Public Enemy's and 2 Live Crew's racism and misogyny were okay because they were black, and Andrew Dice Clay's racism and misogyny were bad because he was white.

But then it was Sinéad's turn to feel the heat. Some clown at the Garden State Arts Center decided that the national anthem was to be played at every event the Arts Center hosted, and when Sinéad arrived she rightly told them that she would prefer to stick with her own repertoire. The resulting headlines made her out to be the new Ayatollah Khomeini, though no self-respecting American would ever stand for being forced to sing the national anthem. Radio stations banned her, Irish bars in Queens threw her off the jukebox, and good ol' Frank Sinatra was quoted as saying Sinéad needed a kick in the pants.

A radio station called me and asked for an interview about the controversy.

"I'd like to make a quick comment," said one caller. "Seems to me that this young lady has what we call a B.A., which is a bad attitude. You know, I understand that this may be part of her image, and maybe the national anthem isn't supposed to be played at the rock concert. I saw her on TV not too long ago in an interview with Maria Shriver, and I've never seen such an ornery and mean, nasty kind of person. Hey, if you don't like the fame that Americans and people of the world have given you, get out of it. I think she should be a little more grateful."

"Well," I said, "I think rock'n'roll is all about celebrating a bad attitude, isn't it? It's about the underbelly, hopefully. I mean I don't want to listen to Donny and Marie."

"Tell me what her view of the national anthem is?" the interviewer asked me, retiring the caller.

"I'm sure she doesn't have a view of the national anthem. I'm sure if she wanted to play any national anthem, she would have played the Irish national anthem, since she's Irish. It's not a case of not being un-American—she's not an American. Why should she play our national anthem before her show? I mean, I think it's ludicrous."

"Can't she see the headlines before she says something like this?"

"Sinéad's 23 years old and from Dublin, she doesn't look for headlines. It's almost an accident that she's as big as she is."

"I wasn't saying she was seeking publicity. Couldn't she see the ramifications that the press would take?"

"No, I don't think Sinéad's that sophisticated."

"What do you think the damage is?"

"I think the damage is that America says, 'Oh, that ungrateful, artful little bald-headed Irish girl, we bought her records and now she doesn't play the national anthem.' But I don't think Americans look beyond the headlines, and I think that's a shame because Sinéad's an awfully talented person and a delightful person."

"But when they take the makeup off and sit down and become more like you and I?"

"Sinéad's a delightful person, she's really a sweetheart, and I think she's a little overwhelmed at what has happened to her, and I think she's trying to maintain who she is, and I think it comes off —"

"—as arrogance?"

"Yeah. But you know, she's 23 years old and the whole world is watching her."

**W**ALKING DOWN THE HALLWAY of the Omni Berkshire I sense right away that things are different. Coming out of the elevator, the maids are huddled in a doorway talking about the correct way to make up the Bald One's room. The door is answered by a hulking, good-looking bruiser named John whose job is to catch the bullets in his teeth. Ciara O'Flanagan is there again, now working as Sinéad's personal assistant. Sitting on the couch, wearing a long, beautiful black dress, purple granny glasses, and... combat boots, is Sinéad, looking as dreamy as ever.

And even more startling, she is

tanned and relaxed. Instead of worrying that someone is going to catch her moonlighting as a star and return her to the dreariness of a Dublin suburb to live the boring life of a housewife, she looks as if she has finally accepted that it really is her own life she is living. When she leads me to the room next door to sit down and do the interview, she acts like she owns the hotel, instead of her usual way: like she'd just snuck in the back door.

"So what are we going to talk about this time?" I ask.

"I don't know. You haven't asked me anything yet."

"I think the last thing you said to me was, 'I am not a rock star.'"

"No, well, I'm not, insofar as I don't know what a rock star is. I'm not what people perceive a rock star to be. I'm not what I know they mean when they say, 'You're a rock star.' That's not what I am. I like being a human being."

"What about the quote from *Musi-*

sort of person, you know? I just get on with business."

"So, what do you do all day?"

"(Grinning) Just roam around and be a rock star."

"Do you like it now?"

"Yeah, I do actually."

**YOU KNOW** I tell Sinéad, "I defended you. I defended your honor."

"Me? Who called you?"

"WNBC radio."

"Who are they?"

"Network radio. It goes around the country."

"What's this?"

"The transcripts. It was the day after you appeared on the cover of the *New York Post* for not letting the Garden State Arts Center play the national anthem before your show. I did an interview defending you. Chivalry is not dead, Sinéad."

"Thank you, Legs. (Reading) It's an accident that she's as big as she is. It's true. That's very accurate for you to say. Thank you very much. (Reading) How well do you know Sinéad? 'Well, that's kind of sticky.'"

"Not at all," is what I should have said."

"Thank you. Can I keep that?"

"Sure."

"Thank you."

"When I said in that interview that I didn't think you were that sophisticated, I didn't mean it as an insult."

"No, I wasn't offended, and I'm not sophisticated and I don't want to be. I don't want to start thinking that that's important, you know? 'Cause it's not. It's very easy to fall into the trap. You know, you want everybody to like you. I can't allow myself to start thinking about what effect that's going to have on the public, or I'm really doing it for myself. I can't start living my life for the media or to encourage favor with everybody."

"And they do now, Sinéad? They're screaming for you?"

"I don't know. Some do, some don't. It's not important. What's important is that they understand whatever it is you're saying."

"Do you think they do?"

"Yeah, I do. I'm sure they do. There was a time when I thought they didn't. But with the national anthem thing, talking to my audience, to the people that like me, I know they do get it and they do understand. So, that's a success as far as I'm concerned."

"Was the backlash overwhelming?"

"Yeah, it was. It was very frightening. But it wasn't frightening enough to make me change my beliefs or apologize. I didn't feel I had anything to apologize for."

## The maids are huddled in a doorway talking about the correct way to make up the Bald One's room.

can magazine? 'If they don't leave me alone, I'm going to stop doing this.' Are you serious?"

"No. At the time, that's how I felt. Now I understand it better."

"What prompted it?"

"What prompted it was I came here on tour and I didn't know what to expect. And the whole success thing happened very quickly, and it wasn't what I had in mind. I didn't understand it, and I didn't understand it from the people's point of view. I just told them to go away. I let it freak me out too much. But now I think I'm more relaxed about it. I realize that people mean well and that they have a lot of affection for me and they want to let me know it."

"Can you walk around? Or, is that why that big guy in the other room is there?"

"No, I can walk around. I don't have a problem with people wanting to say hello to me. When it gets too much or if I'm pissed off or if I've got something going on or I've got something on my mind, I don't particularly feel like being chatty. Then he sort of gives them this feeling like stay off me. It doesn't happen to me that much. I don't really get mobbed; I'm not that





## Sinéad O'Connor

"Andrew Dice Clay. Don't you think it's a dangerous idea for one artist to boycott another artist?"

"I wasn't boycotting him."

"What happened?"

"I have to be aware of the fact that I am in a way an influence on people. And I didn't want to be responsible for somebody being influenced or being exposed to things that I don't believe in."

"Did you feel that appearing on the show with him would somehow endorse his behavior?"

"I found it to be irresponsible for a number of reasons. I felt first that it would be insulting to a lot of women, that in some way look up to me—well, not look up to me, but respect me—I felt that it would be disrespectful of me to affiliate myself with that. And secondly, because I have a problem with homophobia and racism."

"But, you didn't on the MTV Awards, with 2 Live Crew?"

"But that's because I like 2 Live Crew; I don't like Andrew Dice Clay."

"Wow, I'm glad we straightened that out. So, it's as simple as that?"

"That's not the point I was making. I don't necessarily like 2 Live Crew's records, but, as I said at the MTV Awards, I don't think the censorship thing is about censorship. I think it's about racism. Otherwise, there'd be a lot more bands being censored."

"Agreed, but do you tolerate someone's homophobia and racism because they're black?"

"No, I've never said that I tolerated anything they said in any of their songs. I wouldn't make a comment about 2 Live Crew's songs as to whether I like them or not because that's not the issue. It's not a musical issue. The issue I'm trying to draw attention to is the fact that I believe—and anybody can sit down and tell me I'm wrong—but I believe that the reason why people like the 2 Live Crew are being censored is because they're black. Because I sit watching MTV practically every day, and I can see things like that Warrant video for 'Cherry Pie.' What an offensive video that is—a woman being hosed down, you know? And when the guy looks through the binoculars you can see her tits and her ass, you know? That's quite offensive. Billy Idol, that 'Rock the Cradle' song, is really offensive. That Heart song ['All I Wanna Do Is Make Love to You'] is potentially a dangerous song, in that it could encourage young girls to go out hitchhiking and picking up strange men. And I don't see any of those videos being censored. And yes,

the 2 Live Crew are offensive, yes N.W.A. are offensive—of course they are—but so are people like Billy Idol and so are people like Warrant."

"But—"

"So, if you're gonna censor people, let's censor white people as well. I don't have a problem with censorship for that reason."

"But, why censor anyone?"

"Exactly. I don't think that anybody should be censored. I think that things should have warning stickers. I think that there should be a sort of parental guidance system, the same as there is in film, but I think that a person should be entitled to be exposed to anything that they want to be exposed to. In order for a person to make up their personality and decide what they want and don't want, and what's them and not them, they have to be able to see everything."

"But aren't the stickers a form of censorship?"

"No, I don't think they are. I don't have a problem with stickers at all."

"You don't?"

"No, I don't. I think that something has to be done. There are cases where you have to be careful. Like I, as a mother, have to be careful what my son watches on the television, because I don't want him to grow up thinking that it's all right to shoot people, or that the cowboys were the good guys, you know? Do you know what I mean? So, the same should apply to records until he is 17 or 18 or whatever and he can actually be re-

sponsible enough to chuck out what's shit and keep what's true."

"But don't you think people should be allowed to hang themselves? Don't you think people will figure it out for themselves?"

"Mmm..."

New subject. "It's been a hell of a year for you. And you've missed me terribly."

"Oh, I've been aching for you, Legs, of course."

"You get any hot numbers on this tour, Sinéad?"

"What do you mean by a hot number?"

"You know, hot phone numbers?"

"No, unfortunately. I wish I had."

"You must be doing something wrong."

"I think I am too. I'm trying everything. I've tried everything, but... I don't know. Maybe I need to grow my hair."

"No!"

"The only time I get chatted up is when I have a wig on. But I don't know what I'm doing right now. I might stay in America actually, if I'm allowed."

"Are you doing any movies?"

"I don't know."

"We'll just have to wait."

"I suppose so. I'll have to get a few lessons."

"Are you going to take acting lessons?"

"I suppose I should, although this is quite an acting lesson in itself."

**LEGS MCNEIL**

"I don't really think I'm that popular," Sinéad's second album went triple-platinum.



## Faith No More

continued from page 39

kids would yell "'War Pigs.' Play 'War Pigs.'" The one night we said, "Are you ready for the cover song?" And the audience went crazy with expectation: "Yeah! Yeah! They're gonna play 'War Pigs.'" Then we launched into "Easy."

IF FAITH NO MORE ARE METAL, it's metal without the male fantasies of omnipotence and invulnerability, metal without the L.A. glam sleaze, metal without the sword'n'sorcery imagery. Or as drummer Mike Bordin puts it: "We're not a heavy metal band because we don't have jack-off guitar solos every song and we don't have some dick singing fake opera. We're more acid-head dirtbags."

Existing outside of genre, Faith No More have always been an unconventional band, perhaps too unconventional for their own good. In their early days, they operated an open-nuke policy that led to the hiring of a freaky cross-dressing African American named Chuck as their permanent singer. "It's still a touchy subject," says Mike Bordin of the sacking of Chuck, who would appear onstage with blue cold cream smeared across his face. According to friends of the band it was a long time coming. Back in 1987, so incensed was nice guy Billy Gould at Chuck's lackadaisical, "Don't give a fuck" performance in front of a sold-out crowd in London, they almost came to blows.

"With Chuck in the band we weren't getting anywhere," says Bordin. "It felt like a shut job, like working at McDonald's. The Club Lingerie show set us back two years," Billy Gould adds.

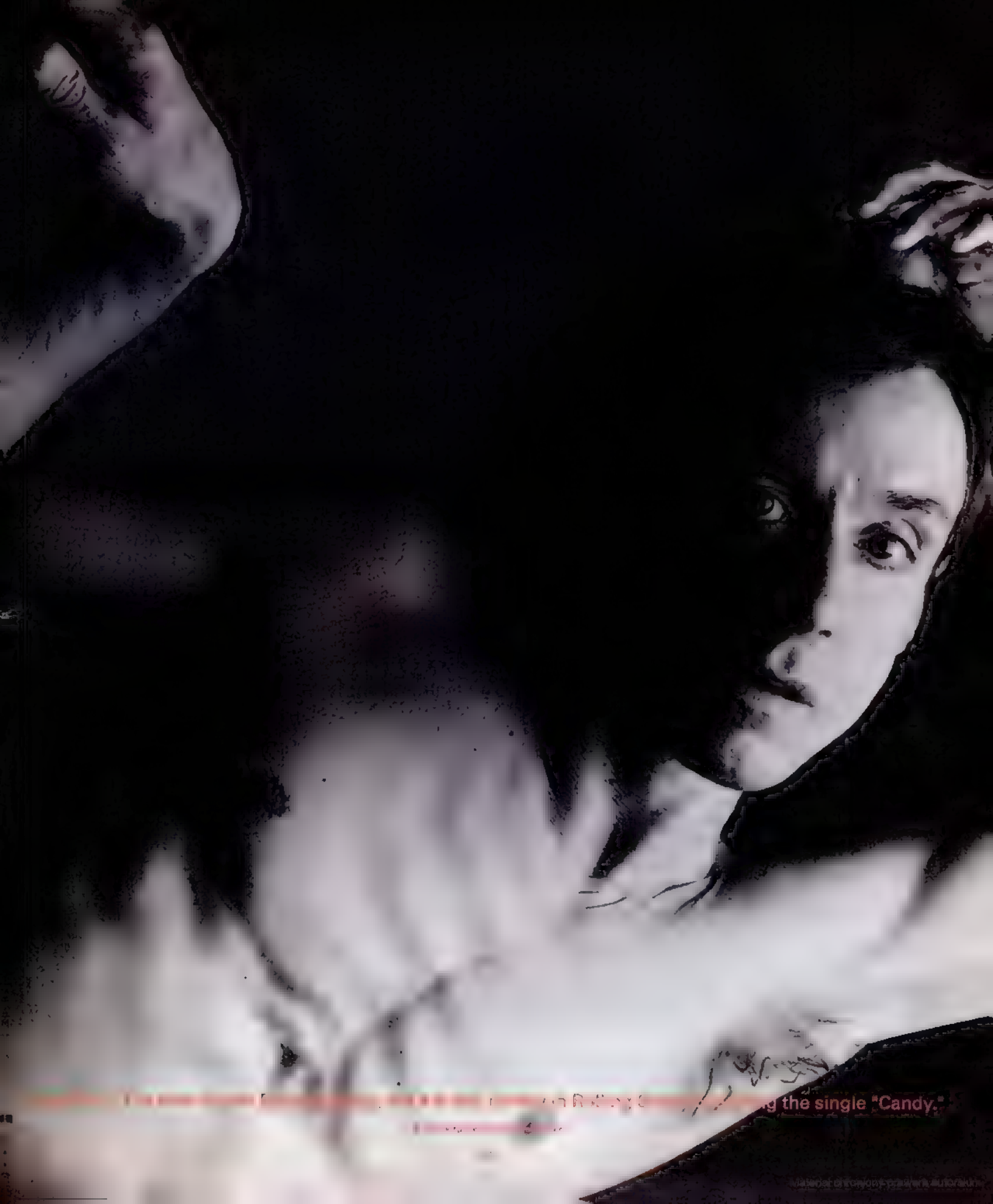
The sacking of Chuck seems like a calculated move, deliberately designed to increase their crossover potential. It did. But with this band, nothing is calculated.

"We were never anybody's marketing fantasy," says Bordin. If Chuck hadn't left the band it's unlikely that Faith No More would have become the major players that they did in 1990, with a platinum album, *The Real Thing*, and a Top Ten single, "Epic." Saving rock'n'roll from itself. It's a dirty job but someone has to do it.

Last words go to Mike Patton: "Especially these days, people expect some kind of profound rock statement. Yet at the same time they don't want you to be boring. I guess people are gonna be real disappointed when they get to know us better."

Band of the year, no contest.

**FRANK OWEN**



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## Weekly World News

continued from page 57

I feel privileged to be learning this—they don't usually let people in here. "We've been a closed society," Eddie tells me. "We've suffered a lot of criticism, especially by academics, who know that we're very popular among college kids. They say that we shouldn't be allowed to do this; that we appeal to our readers' basest qualities; that we lie, and mislead people. To go out and intentionally fool people is the last thing I would ever want to do. I think most people read this and say, 'That's funny, but I don't believe that happened.' And I do throw away stories that are just patently ridiculous.

"Today this guy called and said he has a car that runs on air and has been running on air for the last 60,000 miles, and he's had no problems whatsoever with his engine or his carburetor or anything. Well, do I believe his car runs on air? No. But he believes it, and it's a good story, and I think this nut deserves to be in our paper. A lot of nuts deserve their place in society.

"People say to me, do you really believe this and that? ... For heaven's sake, we entertain people. And in many cases the *Weekly World News* is the only entertainment they have. We make people feel better. Like the guy in rural West Virginia who sees one movie a year and has a black-and-white TV. He gets a real kick out of this paper for 55 cents every week."

Says managing editor Sal Ivone, "A lot of people in this country have never heard of countries the serious papers write about, like Nicaragua or Estonia—but everybody can relate to a haunted toaster.

"We offer our readers what we perceive that they want, rather than personal opinions or philosophies on what they might need."

INDEED, NEARLY EVERY ISSUE of the *Weekly World News* has a UFO-, vampire-, or bigfoot-type story that ranks low on the believability scale, but most of the stories are at least within proximity of what Eddie Clontz likes to call "the shadow of doubt." Stories that leave you wondering, like the Sacramento hypnotist who turns his wife on and off with a television remote control or the Chinese schoolteacher who sewed two noisy students' mouths shut or the unemployed man who got his first job in two years and died of excitement or the New York housewife who ran over her husband because he was possessed by Mickey Mouse or the South American savages who were so impressed with Elvis when they met him in 1981 that they still wear homemade Elvis wigs and dance to jungle versions of his tunes or the pygmies who found gold and bought a fleet of Cadillacs but could barely reach the steering wheel and drove like maniacs causing

massive traffic accidents or the whale who serenaded cruise-ship passengers with a rendition of "Three Coins in the Fountain."

Every day, all over the world, people do amazing things. Perhaps the most extraordinary stories in the *Weekly World News* are the truest ones, the ones pulled straight out of psychology and medical journals. David Byrne based his film *True Stories* on just this type of *Weekly World News* story, such as the couple who hadn't spoken in 30 years.

"Completely true," says Eddie. "We got that one straight out of *The Lancet*." Then there was the man who cut himself while watching TV and bled to death, unable to tear himself from the comedy program he had been waiting a week to see. People are mad. An American couple really *did* freeze-dry their dead baby and stand it in the corner of their living room. A 29-year-old beauty in Italy really did marry a giraffe, who she believed was the reincarnation of her dead fiancé. I ask Eddie about that one and he grins, and says, "Hell, that was believable to me, after the guy who married a head of cabbage." Don't ask.

## EPA

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source of emission. More than 300 substances emitted chiefly by oil refineries and petrochemical plants are officially labeled hazardous. The EPA has managed to regulate just 7 of them in 20 years, leaving fence-line communities vulnerable to the toxic deluge—which amounted to 27 billion pounds of hazardous pollutants released nationwide in 1987.

In some areas, the air contains substances so strong they rust out screens, peel paint off cars, and wilt gardens. No one knows precisely the impact on human health, but the statistics are telling. In Saint Gabriel, Louisiana, a Mississippi River town of 2,100 people flanked by 18 chemical plants, one in every three pregnancies has ended in miscarriage since 1983, more than double the state average. The Kanawha Valley, a mountainous slash of West Virginia overshadowed by six multinational chemical companies, reports lung cancer rates nearly twice the national average and projected cancer risks hundreds of times higher than normal. In 1987, the companies' plants discharged 25 pounds of carcinogens for every valley resident.

"With what we breathe, what would it hurt to smoke?" asks Lillian Erskine, 57, of Nitro, West Virginia, who lost two husbands to cancer and has had cancer herself.

The EPA defends its regulatory lapses by emphasizing the complexities of risk assessment. The science is constantly changing on the health effects of

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## The Replacements

continued from page 69

more than likely in the fourth grade when the 'Mats were putting their town on the map. Paul is 30 now, to his dismay, his publicists will occasionally shave a few years off his age on press releases. He is a little tired of getting up there and bashing it out. The new songs are relatively low-key, reflecting his desire to just sit down and play.

"What the band should do," he says with a smirk, "is just go out there without me." As the near beer makes a feeble stab at a head, he goes on. "There's a lot of 'Wait for Paul to decide what we should do.' I think that mentality has changed now, but it's like, you decide what you want to do. They could just play I'm pushing them to do that. It's like, play your own stuff, which they all want to do, but no one is pursuing it. That creates tension. It's like, be a rocker, be a musician, be a writer, and yeah, we can be the 'Mats, too.

"It's been a long time, it's been 11 years," he continues. "In my mind, right now, there is no band. Just the thought that, right now, I'm not in a band makes me feel good and relaxed. It got to the point where just flipping through the paper and seeing the word *replacement*, even if it's replacement windows, I would get a tight knot in my stomach. It's done things to my brain that are not healthy. I'm tired of being a group. I want to be an individual. Being part of that group has made me a Replacement. I don't feel like that. That was a name we used when we played music live. It means a lot more than that to a lot of people," he stops to light a cigarette

"Okay, kinda in a nutshell... I don't wanna break up the band as much as I want a break from them. Making the record was kind of a break but it would have been a perfect break if I had got off tour one year ago, almost to this day, wrote the thing, been able to record, and spent the year away from them, and then gone, 'Whatta you guys been doing for a year, wanna make a record?' I feel responsible for them, and probably wrongly so. I've always felt that they were dependent on me and it's just recently that I've realized that I'm dependent on them."

**T**HE FIRST JOB Paul ever had was as a janitor for Senator Dave Durenberger of Minnesota, who was recently reprimanded by the House for shady business dealings, a fact not lost on Paul. "I always vowed that I would vote for him if he ran for President," he says, laughing.

A janitor, huh? Paul shrugs. "Yeah, it's my skill, my trade," he says. "I'm not ready to go back to it. But there's a certain peace to it. You come in after everyone has gone home, turn on every radio in the place, and put on the same station. I'd always eat what was left over—there would always be doughnuts and cold pizza—and I'd vacuum." He was 19. Lately he's been doing a lot of looking back. "The worse the present seems to be, the better the past was. In these times when I'm thinking that everything's fucked up, it seems like, 'Boy, we had some great times.' And as soon as something good happens I think, 'Nah, it wasn't that much fun.' We had fun, but a lot of the fun we had wasn't big fun, it was more, 'Remember the time Jimmy stubbed his toe, or someone crapped in their pants?' I'm having to



come to grips with 'adult fun.' " He says the words as though it's a particularly bad piece of fish. "The best fun we had was pretty childish, so now we have to go to the next level. What's fun for the adult?"

I offer, "When you're an adult, fun has repercussions, and if you have that much fun, then you should be able to abandon yourself, and if you do that, you can't be responsible."

"And then you're acting childish," Paul says. "So, basically, you can't have fun!

"I can see the glaring, obvious reasons why we shot ourselves in the foot like they always write," he continues. We are discussing that old puzzle: If the 'Mats fell in a forest, who besides the rock press would know, and were they drunk at the time? Press and fans would tell you that the lack of fame only made them better, purer if you will. The band bought into that for a long time. "There were little tiny things that I think we did, 'cause we didn't know what we wanted," Paul says. "It's like we can be as big as, whatever the example is, but you know that to be big means you can't sit in this restaurant. I don't want any celebrity any bigger than that. I think we could have been bigger if we really wanted to and knew what we wanted and went after it. Just wanting to be big wasn't enough. You fool yourself long enough and think you've got this little niche, the little choo-choo that couldn't, but we did it on purpose. Subconsciously, at least. And we shall stop doing that," he states firmly.

"You don't seem like you'd be very happy being really successful," I tell him.


"I wouldn't," he says. "Basically I'm sort of anxiety-ridden and depressive and things like that, and

that's not the greatest make-up for a performer. You should at least be outgoing. I'm not at all, hence the liquor and all the other things. Once you see up close what it's like to be a star, not that I hang out with them"—he quickly adds—"but I've been there enough to go, 'Woo, I don't wanna be that.' But you do the best you can. You think, 'Am I gonna make this song like a little bit shitty so it doesn't go real big?' You wanna make the stuff as good as possible, but... I don't wanna be M.C. Hammer."

There's a point between that and shooting yourself in the foot.

Paul winces. "Who? The Grateful Dead? Well, it's a fine line. Famous, yeah, but celebrity, no. It's the difference between Keith Richards and Madonna.

"I'd like to be as popular as possible but to be a household word, or to be Bart Simpson"—he shudders—"would be a nightmare. They don't understand when they get someone who doesn't want their image and everything exploited to the hilt, they say, 'This is your chance to make truckloads of money,' and it's like, 'Is anyone gonna be holding my hand in the hotel room when I'm flipping out?'" Paul sighs. "They don't see that side of it."

We are walking again. It's near twilight as we pass through a park that borders on a lake. We're on our way to get pizza. Pizza that is destined to be so bad Paul is already apologizing for it. We go down the street, past more dubious signposts of Replacement history, and there's a patch of freshly laid cement screaming out "Write on me." I scratch in my kid's name and the date. Maybe one day he'll see it. Paul carves "Replacements, RIP" and stands over it, with a curious look on his face. Then he turns, smiles, and we continue down the street. 



in the early pub days when we got pissed every night, 'cause that's how you got paid then—beer and a few bucks."

"I believe a glass of wine a day is actually quite good for you," his colleague interjects. "A bottle of wine is bad for you," he adds with significance.

**T**HERE WAS A STORY some years back—probably apocryphal—concerning a Rolling Stones recording session in Paris. Mick Jagger showed up at the studio one day clutching a bunch of records by then-disco monarchs Chic, cheerfully informing the band that *this* was the new direction. Keith Richards, of course, greeted the news with mixed emotion, and after a quiet word in Jagger's ear the matter was laid to rest.

It's to INXS's great credit that despite Michael Hutchence's nighttime proclivities, such a formal appropriation of dance music styles has never been countenanced. Instead, the band has fashioned an effortlessly funky rock swagger that shows punishing plodders like the Red Hot Chili Peppers and Faith No More a clean pair of heels; nor does this dance-floor pissance depend on a studio life-support system for its efficacy.

The times seem to have fallen into step with INXS.

"It's been an interesting couple of years for music," Hutchence allows. "There's much less darkness and antirhythm happening for white rock bands. That was always the antithesis of what

we're doing, which is why people didn't understand us for a while.

"Our idea of mixing rock and funk originally came from playing in traditional Australian pubs—the tile floor, the hose-it-down-at-the-end-of-the-night type places that hold about 2,000 people. We started out on the funk side of things, but we absorbed influence from bands like Cold Chisel and Rose Tattoo—these were hard-rock bands who didn't fuck around; none of your heavy-metal pretty hair! You start thinking, Can we play this funk rhythm and go *keraaang!* over the top of it? And it is possible.

"Those places were great, but a lot of them turned into yuppie bars, which is a bit sad. As Andrew was saying, you go in, sit down, have a margarita, and watch the bands play on the video screen."

What, one wonders, would the pub-rocking INXS make of today's video-genic model?

"I think if I could see myself now, back then I'd be scared shitless and drop dead," says Farriss.

Huh?

"If time and space differentials could change like that, you'd have a heart attack," Farriss adds with a sigh, exasperated. "It would be too much to cope with mentally. I don't think we're meant to know these things."

I didn't actually mean...

"I think we've maintained our integrity; done what we've wanted to do," offers Hutchence helpfully. "Lately we've been realizing that we're one of the few bands to have lasted the decade. I think that people have seen bands come and go, have seen that one of the most mortal things to do is to

be in a band."

"It's tremendously undignified; people don't understand that there's really no dignity in it," adds an agitated Farriss, recalling a previous interview in which a screening of *This Is Spinal Tap* reduced him to despondency. Was the film's portrayal of his business too close for comfort?

"*Spinal Tap* is fictitious," he patiently explains, "so it wasn't all true. It depends who you are or what you're doing—there's a lot of people who aren't like the characters in *Spinal Tap*. I thought it was a very funny movie, actually."

Dignity. I'd like to return to this question of dignity. ...

"To me, there's far more dignity in not being in a band," Farriss says, "because the whole experience is so voyeuristic. Like now, I don't know if you're interested in the music or if you're trying to see some dark, deep significance in what's going on."

"Basically, we're in the music business; we play music, and everything that happens in between is a lot of fucking shit as far as I'm concerned. In other areas of the work force you can be covered in sweat, be wearing the cheapest pair of overalls you can buy"—stay with this—"you can be covered in animal excrement, but maybe you've still got your dignity. Because no one's sticking a microphone up your arse and asking you about this or that. ..." (If he'd said he was uncomfortable, I would have removed it!)

"You just do your fuckin' job. Whereas, it seems to me, that in this business you're having to constantly *explain* why you're doing things."

Well, excuse me! Two weeks of rectal probing

# the human league

## romantic?

the new album

featuring "heart like a wheel"

The band who brought you "Don't You Want Me," "(Keep Feeling) Fascination" and "Mirror Man" takes on the 90's with their signature techno-pop sound. It's time to get romantic?



"heart like a wheel" produced and mixed by Martin Rushent  
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by the world's pressmen and someone seems to have forgotten his manners.

"The public takes a piece of you," says Hutchence calmly. "I don't know why a mass of people try to figure out the madness of life through one person. I put my viewpoints forward but I'm not trying to change people; I have a lot of faith in people and I don't think they should be mindless and hysterical, following your every move."

So how does it feel to be constantly portrayed as an icon in the classic Jagger/Morrison mold?

"We never think in those terms," he says. "When people start taking themselves seriously and thinking they've got some enormous social significance, that's when you get interviews like in *Spinal Tap*. We come from that Australian thing where you're more like a folk hero than an icon—there's no real

**"What can I say?" says Hutchence.**

**"I just like listening to really loud music in little rooms with lights going 'round!"**

pop stars in Australia."

Do you ever question the huge structure that gets built around bands at your level?

"Yeah, but it's a good thing as well. . . ."

"It's a nice job, it pays well," says Farriss. "You go places and meet interesting people; you can't complain."

You just did.

"Miserable pop stars are the most pathetic people on earth, that *sucks!*" blurts Hutchence, unaccountably "Those people thought that success is something tangible that arrives, but success is something which occurs within yourself; within a band. In some ways success is being fairly sane at the end of it."

"I'd like to clear this up because I feel personally involved here," says Farriss. "I'm not complaining when I talk about what it's like to be a performer—it's not a complaint, it's a fact."

Which has been a fact of your life for over ten years.

"The only facts I'm really sure of are that you're born and you die—everything in between is like a car ride and you don't know when you're going to stop. What is going on? Can you tell me?"

I hastily consult my notes. No answers there

**A** LONG WITH ICON STATUS, of course, comes intense personal scrutiny, which Michael Hutchence has been subject to more than most; his female companions, invariably described as "leggy blondes," appear almost as frequently in interviews as his fellow band members. How does that

make him feel?

"It feels good to be with a leggy blonde! Don't quote that, please," he says, wincing.

All of which has changed since the boy looked at Kylie Minogue, that is—the Australian soap/pop goddess whom Hutchence has been squiring around London as of late. As far as the British tabloids are concerned, *he's* the accessory now.

"That's been a bit strange," Hutchence concedes, "but for me to talk about it now is to be part of it, and I don't see the need. We're in a band playing music so you're getting a lot of us already. Artists give so much—that's their art, putting their life on canvas or on a screen or on a record, and that's about as voyeuristic as I want to get. Of course everybody wants to know how people think, because it makes you feel better if it correlates to your own thoughts."

"There's a song called 'The Stars' on the album," says Farriss, "which deals with people in highly urbanized environments not communicating. We should have town squares like they used to have where people go and say, 'How are you?' You don't have to go to these little socially instituted environments where it's *fashionable*. Personally I don't think fashion and trends are really going to solve the world's problems."

How do INXS intend to solve the world's problems?

"I couldn't claim to sum up our political agenda in one sentence," says Hutchence with a shrug. "In the last couple of years, though, it's been great to see positivity again, to see idealism becoming a re-

ality. We've been going on about that stuff for a while and people would say, 'That's a bit uncool, guys.'"

Of course, it remains to be seen if there's any substance behind all the talk of "positivity."

"I hope there is—if you get cynical you just drive yourself insane after a while."

So do you think cynicism is tired—an '80s thing?

"It was too evident, yeah. I mean, I love a lot of hardcore bands and underground music, but there seemed to be a time when you didn't have cred unless you were gothic in your outlook. So go read *Gormenghast*; I've heard enough!"

Last time you appeared in these pages you were talking about . . .

"John Malkovich is a *great* actor you know," notes Andrew Farriss, glancing up from his reading material. "He really is. Oh, sorry."

As I was saying, drugs, the end of civilization, the whole nine yards. . . .

"I'm good for a wacky old quote, aren't I?" Michael marvels. "I was possibly talking about the fact that people are so willing to let others carry their political aspirations for them. It was a pretty generalized statement. Sometimes I'll just say stuff 'cause it'll have a funny effect. I'm a bit naive; a bit casual about things like that."

"The trouble is," sniffs Farriss, "people put tape recorders on, and you relax for a couple of hours and say things, then they go back and put them on again."

That, I suggest, is the nature of the game.

"So who's winning?"





pollutants. By law, costs to industry are not supposed to be factored into prescriptions for clean air; only the best safeguards for the public health are to be considered. But the agency is stymied by industry lobbying and litigation. Forced to decide between special interests and the public interest, it often lands in the middle or gets stuck in inaction—chambers of commerce thus breathe the easiest.

**T**HE EPA'S RECORD OF TIMIDITY spans the industrial sector. Whether it's allowing the steel industry in Indiana to ignore federal limits on particulate pollution or letting midwestern utilities hurl acid rain ingredients at New England lakes and forests, the EPA has ceded environmental interests to the corporate bottom line.

Perhaps its most calamitous appeasement was of CFCs manufacturers. The use of CFCs in aerosols was banned in 1978, four years after Sherry Rowland, a University of California chemist, identified the chemical as a threat to the vaporous veil of ozone that lies high above the earth and screens out harmful ultraviolet rays. But despite growing scientific evidence of danger, the EPA stood by while industrial application of CFCs as refrigerants, solvents, and foam-blowing agents exploded in the 1980s. An industry alliance, led by E. I. du Pont de Nemours & Co., denied the scientific findings and lobbied strenuously against controls.

In 1987, the EPA changed course and led an inter-

national effort to curb use of the ubiquitous chemical, but it took a lawsuit by the Natural Resources Defense Council to motivate the agency. By then, the damage was extensive. Ozone concentration over densely populated areas of North America and Europe had thinned by 3 percent. Half of the ozone above Antarctica was gone.

"The question has always been whether we'll be shutting down an industry unnecessarily," says Rowland, "not whether we are risking unalterable changes in the atmosphere."

Often it has taken the courts to force the EPA to live up to its name. The agency points proudly today to the huge reduction in airborne levels of lead, which can cause neurological damage in children, risky pregnancies, and hypertension in adult males. But the EPA set atmospheric limits on lead in 1978 only after a lawsuit brought by environmentalists.

Moreover, once legal pressures ease, so does the agency's zeal for regulation. For example, despite evidence that phasing out the small amounts of lead left in gasoline would prevent 123,000 cases of high blood pressure in men and health risks for 7,000 children, it has failed to order the ban. And four years after an EPA study showed excessive levels of lead in the drinking water of 42 million Americans—which account for lower IQ scores in 240,000 children a year—the agency still says that it is "studying" ways of dealing with the problem.

It is such gaps between assessment of danger and regulatory response that frustrate the EPA's critics—and mobilize them. How can an agency sworn to safeguard the public health permit any release of substances known to kill and maim?

The question is asked regularly of pesticides. The EPA classifies 69 agricultural chemicals as carcinogens. Dozens more are believed to cause birth defects, genetic mutations, or nervous system damage. Yet the agency continues to permit their use on fruits and vegetables. Even the manufacturers act faster to withdraw dangerous chemicals, such as EBDCs (ethylene bisdithiocarbamates). A family of fungicides used on a third of the produce grown in this country, EBDCs were first identified as cancer agents in 1977. The EPA began investigating but backed off because of industry pressure.

In August 1987, major producers volunteered to stop producing the chemicals for most uses after a National Toxicology Program study discovered that EBDCs pose an aggregate cancer risk 700 times higher than the EPA considers acceptable. Four months after the companies acted, the EPA announced plans to ban most uses.

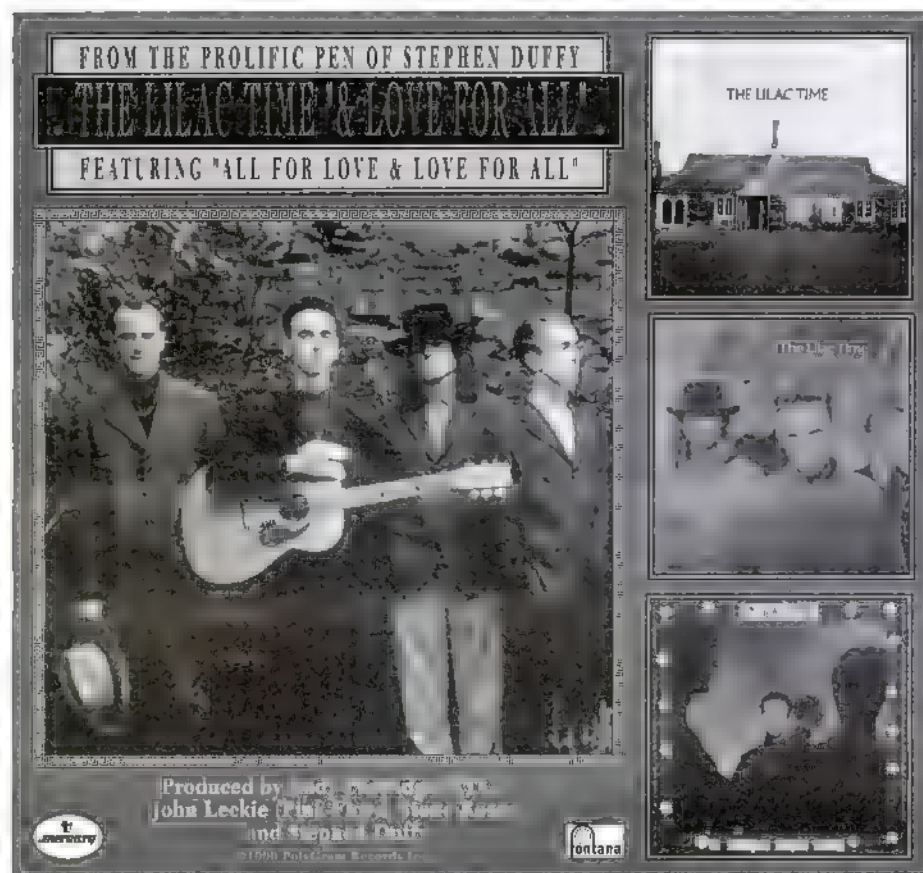
Federal law prohibits the use of pesticides that pose "unreasonable adverse effects to man or the environment." The EPA is supposed to balance those concerns against the economic costs of a ban to farmers and the nation's food supply. But the cost benefit analysis has not been applied to most pesticides in use today because they were ap-

**Rather than direct permanent cleanups with cutting-edge technology, the EPA's Superfund program has often relied on cheaper, stopgap fixes that end up making matters worse.**

proved in the 1960s before full health, environmental, and safety tests were required. In 1972, Congress called on the EPA to review the licenses of all pesticides within three years after obtaining and analyzing new test data. By 1987, when the law was being revised, the agency had managed to review two of the six hundred active ingredients in 35,000 types of pesticides.

**T**HE SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY in central California is the world's richest, most densely cultivated farm belt, and perhaps one of the most heavily exposed to pesticides. About 7 percent of the pesticides used in the United States are sprayed, injected, and sprinkled onto an area that represents 1 percent of U.S. crop land. For years the chemicals helped the valley prosper, preventing the plagues of insects, weeds, and bacteria that wiped out entire crops before World War II. Now a new plague infects the valley, prompting many residents to question whether the pesticides so pervasive in the environment have reaped a harvest of pain.

Health officials have identified childhood cancer clusters in two towns in the valley. In Fowler, where a third of the drinking water wells were contaminated with a cancer-causing pesticide, four children got leukemia between 1981 and 1983—a 1 in 10,000 chance of happening in a town of just 3,000 people. In McFarland, 16 youngsters fell victim to cancer between 1975 and 1988. Half of the



cases were diagnosed from 1982 through 1985, eight times the number expected for a town of McFarland's size in a four-year period.

Pesticides have not been officially indicted for either cluster. But they have been primary suspects. In McFarland, 17 tons of pesticides linked to cancer, genetic damage, birth defects, and reproductive problems were used from 1979 to 1983.

"Our kids have been the canaries," says Connie Rosales, a McFarland homemaker whose son Randy developed non-Hodgkins lymphoma in 1983.

**I**F IT CAN BE SAID that the EPA fiddles while the environment burns, the Superfund program is an exception. There, inaction may have been preferable to the widespread bungling that has characterized the \$10 billion project to clean up toxic wastes.

Inspired by the devastation of Love Canal in Niagara Falls, New York, Superfund was established by Congress in 1980 to rescue the thousands of communities poisoned by industrial waste. The EPA was directed to inventory the most needy sites, determine the best cleanup strategies, and force polluters to pay for the restoration. The idea of a federal white knight facing down industrial dumpers gave hope to victims nationwide.

But in the past decade, Superfund's managers kept misfiring the slingshot. Rather than direct permanent cleanups with cutting-edge technology, the EPA often relied on cheaper, short-sighted stop-gap fixes that ended up making matters worse.

The Stringfellow site in Glen Avon, California, is a case history of Superfund's failures. When tests turned up toxic chemicals in the town's private

wells, the program paid to have DDT-laced soil scooped from the areas and contaminated liquid sucked out of the ground. Then, in a common practice derided as the "Superfund shell game," the EPA had the wastes transferred to another California dump site. Soon that site began leaking and became a candidate for cleanup.

Another common strategy that failed at Stringfellow is containment. A clay cap placed atop the surface eroded and sank, permitting rain to permeate the ground. The water put pressure on an underground clay barrier erected to wall in the waste, forcing it through unsealed cracks in the bedrock and farther from the site.

The upshot was that after spending \$34 million within the first six years of Superfund, officials could point to little progress in stopping the plume of dangerous chemicals spreading underground toward the drinking water supply of 600,000 people.

Nationwide, the report card is not much better. Now 10 years old, Superfund has left only 29 sites clean enough to remove them from its inventory. Another 1,200 sites remain on the list and thousands more are waiting to get on.

When Reilly entered office, he targeted Superfund as a top priority and significantly stepped up the rate of cleanups. He has moved on a number of other regulatory fronts, issuing the EBDC ban, phasing out asbestos use, ordering reductions in the smog-producing volatility of gasoline, and proposing to make recycling of certain materials a condition of approving new incinerators. His proposed budget for next year's budget is 12 percent higher, and the agency, fatter by 2,000 employees, may be turned into a Cabinet department by Congress.

The coronation of Reilly as secretary of the environment would symbolize the vigor and confidence he hopes to bring to his agency. He already has helped to turn the spotlight on environmental protection and get the President's attention. But whether he has persuaded Bush to truly move the issue from the "margins to the mainstream," as Reilly claimed in a recent speech, is open to debate.

When it comes to issues concerning industry, Reilly often finds himself isolated and outvoted by Chief of Staff Sununu and Budget Director Darman. In clean-air negotiations with the Senate last March, the administration was represented by White House advisers, not its top environmental officer. And despite Reilly's prodding, the President has been slow to move on global environmental problems considered the greatest threat to mankind, especially industrial emissions of global-warming gases.

At those moments, Reilly appears less like an environmental czar than ambassador to the environmental movement, dispatched to put the best face on administration policy but kept far from the inner councils where those policies are formulated. The fear of Reilly's supporters is that his isolation will increase as the government grapples with oil shortages caused by Persian Gulf unrest.

On its 20th birthday in December 1990, the EPA's fate is thus very much tied to that of its administration. If Reilly manages to uphold his cause in the inner circle, his agency may finally live up to its mission. But if the past prevails and Reilly acquires the second-class citizenship of most EPA administrators, the nation's steward of the environment is doomed to remain its stooge.

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## Neil Young

continued from page 75

sure to close the barn door," warbles Young. The woozy performance feels so good you laugh out loud. It's a million miles away from *Reactor*, the record on which Young himself spooked the Horse so long ago.

Later that night, I discuss the record with a bleary-eyed Young. One thing that knocks me out about *Ragged Glory* is its subtle spiritual feeling—quite a surprise from the man responsible for one of the most pessimistic songs about faith ever written, "Star of Bethlehem." Thus almost religious feel—combined with minimal, abstract lyrics that rise and fall in a miasma of squalling guitars—gives the record an odd transcendental quality. I tell him I didn't know whether the album should come with a joint or a Bible.

Young laughs. "It's the new songs, they're the core of that feeling. Those are the ones I wrote in the barn where my cars are. I'd come over in the morning and just get into the right space and play for a while every day. Took my Baldwin Exterminator in there with my Deluxe. No microphone. And I just turned it up and stood in front of these 15 old cars with their hoods up. Just me and all these

**In February of this year, Young called a meeting with the band so everybody could air their grievances. By June, the band was recording and three months later *Ragged Glory* was done.**

old cars. And the spirits of the people who were in them." I ask him about "Love and Only Love." Like the other new songs, the message seems positive, but Young often sounds like he's in agony while he's singing it.

"There are three different takes of 'Love and Only Love,'" says Young. "Each one is completely different. Two are over ten minutes, the other is over nine. One's really fast, another really slow. The slow one is angelic—the up side of the song. The fast one is pretty much the up side of it, too. But the *middle one*—the one we used—there's really a battle going on. A battle between good and bad. Because every time we had to overdub the vo-

cals on the chorus, it got so fucking uncomfortable the tune would make me uptight just listening to it. But I couldn't get away from the song. Finally, we took key phrases from the slow version and laid them into the middle one. So the vocal goes from being uptight to being completely released in each line. At the end of the line it just opens up. We actually overdubbed 'Love and Only Love' three times. It was all so much fun, the work didn't seem to matter.

"It's funny. This record is *strong*, like a big down record, yet it's so positive. But it's not missing any of those depressing elements—they're all there. There just seems to be some sort of counterpoint that makes it all right." When I had spoken to Young last November, he told me about a dream where he had written all these incredible songs. Are these the ones? "Those new songs I mentioned—I'm pretty sure those are the ones. And that was wild. Only now, I hope nothing happens." He laughed. "Things like that make you wonder. I hope that doesn't mean it's a wrap." At least *Ragged Glory* would make for a great exit, I think to myself. Hell, the guy could've been hit by a truck after he put out *Old Ways*.

A little while later, Young and Briggs are sitting at the kitchen table. The pair can be unbelievably focused on their music, like two squirrels trying to devour the same nut. "*Freedom* is fine," says Young, "but it didn't have the groove it should've had. Old people liked that record. There's a lotta people out there who didn't like *Freedom* who will love this record."

"It's a new thing, man. This music is new," says Briggs. "There hasn't been no music like this in 20 years." Briggs brings up all the different musical influences he heard on the record, and Young agrees: "The Doors are in there, Hendrix, Clapton, Link Wray, but it's not conscious. These are my roots, people I've listened to. And it's experienced, because all the different kinds of music I've been playin' in the past ten years taught me something. It's just tapped in on all my sources, man. Everything just opened up all at once. You can't play guitar any other way. If you're just gonna play a riff you can groove and everything, but if you're gonna go out and explore the melodic wilderness, ya gotta be tapped into the source."

"The thing I like about the playing on this record is it doesn't have any rage," says Briggs. "It's like all the chops have been washed clean." It's true: The only really impassioned rock'n'roll Young released in the '80s was on last year's *Eldorado* EP—vio-

lent, tortured music. The playing on *Ragged Glory* is much closer to the loose, liquid groove of *Zuma*. "Yeah," says Young. "All that blind rage is gone." I ask what happened to that anger. "I don't know," says Young, a crooked, cryptic smile crossing his face. "You tell me, hoss."

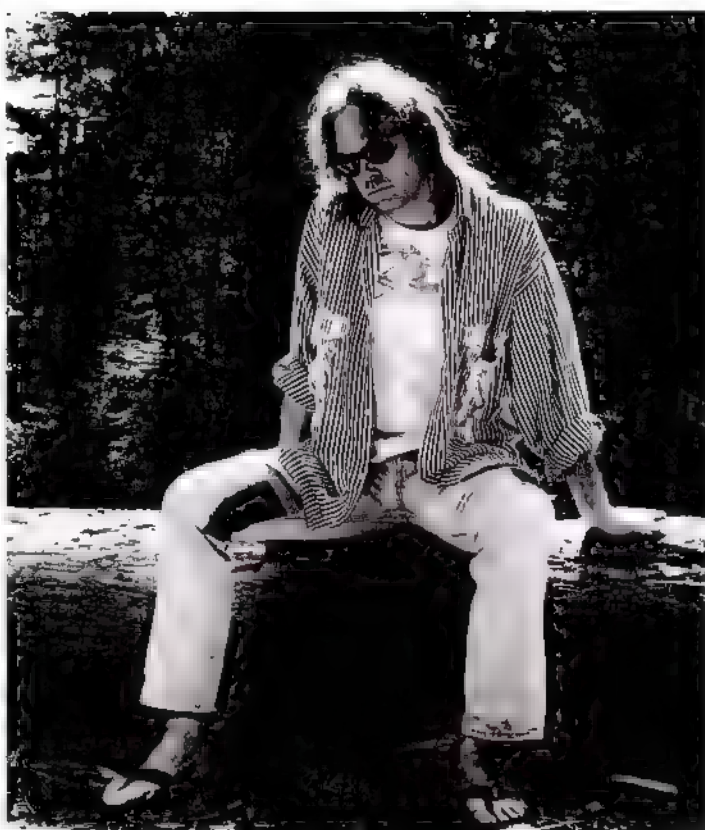
**T**HE NEXT DAY, Young is going over changes in the lyric sheet. Briggs and I start giving him shit, telling him printed rock lyrics are irrelevant. "Little Richard didn't need a lyric sheet," I complain. Five minutes later Young is on the phone with the Warner Bros. art department. "Janet? Well, uh, me an' the boys have been talkin', and we decided we don't need a lyric sheet for this one." (*Long pause.*) "You've already laid it out? Well, paint it black or leave it blank or somethin'. This one they're gonna have to listen to."

The next week is spent mixing and remixing. Another playback takes place, this one with a much funkier audience that includes Buffalo Springfield alumni Bruce Palmer and Dewey Martin. They get into the music immediately. The whole room is dancing, including Young, who shuffles around the room, his arms flailing to the beat.

"Love and only love will endure / Hate is everything you think it is," sings his voice from studio speakers, sad little guitar figures burrowing in and out of the chorus. Young has finished his best rock'n'roll record in 12 years, and for a moment the fucker looks relaxed, even happy.

As dusk is falling that evening, I drive up to the studio with Young and Sampedro in Young's white Eldorado. I ask Young if I can take a shot at summing up the new album and he says okay. Is it about a self-obsessed asshole who's trying to deal with his feelings and become a human being? Sampedro collapses with laughter and I think Young might drive off the road. "Yeah," he says, laughing. "That's pretty good." "It doesn't get more personal than 'Love to Burn,'" I say. "Yeah—painfully personal. In the song you got all these things happening and you just gotta go for it. Just gotta keep tryin' to give, keep tryin' to stay open. You can't shut down because of all the bad stories, the bad news movies that happen in life."

But weren't you shut down for most of the '80s, I ask? "Fuckin' A. Shut down and boarded up. But ya gotta keep goin'." The car lumbers up the steep hill. "Ya gotta open up. That's the deal, man."



Neil Young in all his ragged glory.

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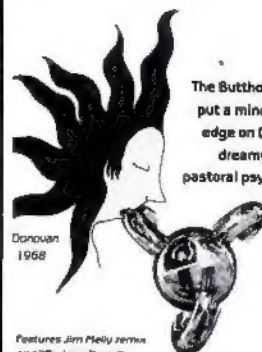
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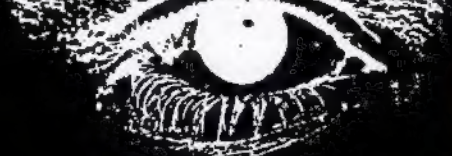
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# DAN QUAYLE'S YEAR

**Warm-up.** December 11, 1989. "I believe we are on an irreversible trend toward more freedom and democracy, but that could change."

**February 4.** Birthday boy turns 43. Sixty-one percent of the respondents to a *Wall Street Journal*/NBC poll say Quayle is unqualified to be President.

**February 11.** The *Dan Quayle Quiz Book* ranks second on the *Washington Post* best-seller list for paperback nonfiction.

**February 26.** *Newsweek* reports that one of Bush's advisers considered putting Quayle on *The Tonight Show*, having already ruled out *Late Night With David Letterman*: "It's wise to keep the Vice President away from Stupid Pet Tricks."

**February 27.** Quayle's motorcade blocks the caravan of John Van de Kamp, the Democratic attorney general running for mayor of San Francisco. A car also stuck in the traffic jam bears a bumper sticker reading, Honk If You're Smarter Than Dan Quayle, setting off, according to the *San Francisco Chronicle*, "a cacophony of greeting, accompanied by a variety of hand signals."

**March 4.** *Face the Nation*, CBS-TV: LESLIE STAHL: You campaigned for a pro-choice candidate. QUAYLE: That's not a new policy. STAHL: Then abortion is not murder? QUAYLE: We recognize that the tent is bigger than just being pro-life. STAHL: Isn't that pro-choice? QUAYLE: Our position is firm.

**March 5.** On the indoor track of an L.A. YMCA, Quayle runs in the wrong direction, posing an obstacle for ten people who are too polite to say anything. His Secret Service men turn him around.

**March 11.** On a trip to Chile for the inauguration of President Patricio Aylwin, Quayle gives advice to the new leader: "You smile discreetly, you look like you're enjoying yourself, like you're ready to get down to serious business. You've got to be careful what you say." On the same trip, Quayle buys a well-hung Chilean doll. "I could take this



home, Marilyn," he says. "This is something teenage boys might find of interest." He claims he wants to "pull it out at the appropriate time" at press conferences. "You're so sick," says a smiling Marilyn.

**March 23.** "If we do not succeed, then we run the risk of failure."

**April 1.** April Fool's Day. What's Dan Quayle's position on *Roe v. Wade*? Answer: It depends on how deep the water is.

**June 1.** Dorothy Vallosio, a retired schoolteacher in Peoria, Illinois, founds Hit the Trail for Dan Quayle, a lobbying group to protest ridicule of Quayle. She argues that the "media is dominated by liberals who try to make a fool of Quayle on purpose. All my life I have lived under liberals and it is time to hit back."

**June 19.** The Bureau of Prisons rejects a claim on behalf of Brett Kimberlin asserting that his civil rights have been violated in the following incident: Four days before the Presidential election, and less than an hour before he was to announce at a prison press conference that he had been Dan Quayle's pot dealer, Kimberlin was placed in solitary confinement. He was not available to the press until eight days after the election.

**July 13.** Tells MIA relatives that he will never apologize for his Vietnam-era service in the National Guard in a rare mention of the issue.

**July 31.** The home-state favorite finishes a cheeseburger at Wilson's Sandwich Shop in Finley, Indiana, leaving nothing behind. In nearby Naples, Indiana, a piece of donut and a coffee stirrer dating from the 1988 campaign have been shellacked and put on display. Also, stumping in Ohio for the GOP nominee George Voinovich: "Yes, George Bush really wants to be governor of this state."

**August 10.** Vegiforms, a Cincinnati-based company, introduces a plastic mold of Dan Quayle's head for growing pumpkins.

**August 29.** Since the Iraqi invasion, the *Washington Post* has run 361 articles in which *Bush* and *Iraq* appear in the same story; four in which *Quayle* and *Iraq* appear together. In one of the four, an American trapped in Kuwait is quoted as saying, "We certainly don't want Dan Quayle in charge [while Bush is on vacation]."



**September 5.** Stumping in Texas for gubernatorial candidate Clayton Williams, who once said, "Rape is like the weather: If it's inevitable, then just relax and enjoy it," and has made an issue of his opponent's principled refusal to submit to a drug test. The veep also says SDI should be deployed "to protect against asteroids hitting the earth." An alternative plan? Colonize Mars: "Man is essentially in the same orbit . . . somewhat the same distance from the sun, which is very important. We have seen pictures where there are canals, we believe, and water. If there is water, that means there is oxygen. If oxygen, that means we can breathe."

**September 19.** On education: "Paying teachers more won't solve the problem. [They must] be motivated by other concerns than putting food on the table. Teachers are the only profession that teach our children."

**September 26.** On the Mideast crisis: "We are ready for any unforeseen event that may or may not occur."

**September 28.** On incumbency: "[We must] limit the terms of members of Congress, especially members of the House and members of the Senate."

**October 2.** *Nightline*, ABC-TV. TED KOPPEL: In the latest poll, 69 percent of the respondents said that they felt uncomfortable with the idea of President Quayle. What is it that a guy has to do . . . ? QUAYLE: But Ted, the underlying assumption in that question is that something happens to the President. And that would be a disturbing thought for anyone, this President included.

**October 31.** Dan Quayle pumpkin harvest.

**November 17.** Dan and Marilyn's 18th wedding anniversary. What did Marilyn say to Dan on their wedding night? Answer: You're no Jack Kennedy.

**November 22.** Thanksgiving Day. What do you get when you cross a turkey and a hawk? Answer: Dan Quayle.

**Mary Ann Marshall and Nathaniel Wice**

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